

THE INDEPENDENT

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WEATHER: Cloudy

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Your Saturday Independent: a bigger and better newspaper

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A week's TV, arts and entertainment: the complete guide

The Long Weekend

A guide to garden snobbery

The Magazine

A celebration of the pleasures of eating and drinking



The disappeared of Middle England

James Cusick

Thousands of vulnerable missing children in Britain could be found and helped, the Government would claim, if it was not for the fact that the missing persons register, it was claimed yesterday.

The claim was highlighted by an investigation into one local authority which revealed that one in six children who were supposed to be in care in Britain could be missing and their files lost.

Misplaced files, lack of follow-up care, and children who have effectively "disappeared" are listed in an independent report into Gloucestershire social services, leaked to the BBC. The investigation was commissioned after the discovery of the victims of serial killers, Fred and Rosemary West.

The report says that 100 people went missing in the area over two decades and reveals that 290 council files on children in care are missing. The authors of the report, the Heritage Commission, believe the situation to be similar all over the country.

Although Gloucestershire social services were yesterday officially claiming the report was only a draft and that the situation had since improved, the lack of nationally held comprehensive data on "missing" people was criticised by leading children's organisations.

"The loss of thousands of people's names is a disaster but there are no plans to change the situation," said a spokesman for the National Missing Persons Register.

Information, according to the child campaign group, is "thousands of names" which the UK's various police authorities hold their own, and none reported missing, which computers do not communicate with each other.

The main police database on missing persons is held at Scotland Yard. But other forces throughout in England and Wales, and in Scotland, cannot access Scotland Yard's list.

Social services and other statutory authorities must inform police of known missing persons. But officially reported people may only be the tip of Britain's "missing" iceberg.

Families wishing to avoid police involvement, can confidentially inform the National Missing Person Helpline (NMPH). The charity compiles the National Missing Persons Register, currently holding 14,000 names.

Yesterday, both the NMPH and leading children's charities called on the Government to

take immediate action in the wake of the Gloucester fiasco to establish an independent and comprehensive missing persons database.

Co-founder of the NMPH, Mary Asprey, said: "Not all parents report missing persons to the police. If parents fear their problem children may be involved with the police, they often come to us. Some go to no one because it is the family that is the source of the trouble."

Ian Sparks, chief executive of The Children's Society, said: "A comprehensive national missing persons register is essential for measuring the scale of the problem and determining what services are offered."

Bob Lewis, president of the Association of Directors of So-

cial Services, said that although he was concerned by the report's findings, he did not believe the situation in Gloucestershire was repeated across Britain. "I am disappointed if the files have vanished but surprised if that mirrors the situation through the whole of the country."

Liberal Democrat health spokesman Simon Hughes called on local authorities to reveal how many children in their care had gone missing.

"Just two weeks ago, an NSPCC inquiry set out the alarming level of abuse of young people throughout the country," he said. "Now there is evidence that there may be thousands of young people who leave care without anyone in authority knowing where they have gone."

Gloucestershire county council and Gloucestershire police refused to comment on the draft report, saying they would wait until it was officially published next week. However, yesterday the council was considering postponing the publication.

Electronic tags for children

Jason Bennetto
Crime Correspondent

Child criminals aged as young as ten will be placed under "house arrest" using electronic tags attached to their arms or legs, under controversial Government proposals to be announced later this month.

The measure, in which parents of juvenile offenders will also face fines if their children break their curfew orders, will be introduced as an amendment to the Crime Bill, *The Independent* has learnt.

Labour and probation officials last night condemned the move as policy by stealth and argued that it was side-stepping proper parliamentary debate.

John Major first unveiled the proposals, which are aimed at teenage tearaways who vandalise and terrorise communities, at the Tory party conference in October, but there was no mention of the scheme in the Queen's Speech.

The use of electronic tags has already caused a furore after an inconclusive, and at times failing, 17-month trial involving adults.

Under the amendment, it is understood that magistrates will be able to sentence juvenile offenders, aged from 10 to 16, to a curfew order enforced by an electronic monitoring device. Up to 50,000 young offenders could be eligible for the tags, although only a tiny proportion would expect to be fitted.

The new court order would be aimed at offences such as vandalising vehicles, spraying graffiti and smashing windows. Typically they would have to remain at home from 6pm to 6am.

Included in the order would be a "blind-over" condition on the child's parents or parent. If the young offender breached their curfew order or damaged their tag, the mother and or father would be liable for a fine, possibly up to £1,000. The young offenders would be sent back to court for a new sentence.

Penal reformers argue that the type of teenager likely to receive the new punishment would already have an unstable

QUICKLY

Zaire rescue fails
France appeared yesterday to have failed in its bid to muster a multinational force to intervene in the border region of eastern Zaire. Page 12

Manton victory
Teachers at Manton Junior School in Nottinghamshire will return to work after the mother of a 10-year-old boy who sparked a strike agreed to move him. Page 10

CONTENTS

The Broadsheet	22-23
Business & City	22-23
Comment	19-21
Foreign News	12-17
Gazette	18
Home News	2-11
Leading Articles	19
Letters	19
Obituaries	18
Shares	24
Sport	25-30
The Long Weekend	
Arts	4-5
Books	6-8
Country	17
Gardens	16
John Walsh Interview	3
Property	19, 20
Money	21-24
Shopping	25-28
Unit trusts	20
Travel	9-15
TV & radio	29-30
Weather	2



John Wheeler
HE WANTS IT THROUGH HIS HIPPLE SARGE

family background and would be considered disruptive. They believe tags would worsen matters and youngsters will ignore the curfews.

"Tagging works by attaching an electronic transmitter bracelet to the ankle or wrist of the offender. It is worn at all times and triggers a warning signal to a monitoring centre via a telephone line when an offender leaves home."

It is understood that Home Office officials are still drawing up the details of the amendment and that ministers will argue that the measures were not included in the Crime Bill because they were not completed at the time of the Queen's Speech.

Harry Fletcher, assistant general secretary of the Association of Probation Officers, said: "For the last 60 years the focus of legislation has been on the liberty of the child. Tagging turns the clock back. This mea-

sure is about the best interests of the politicians - not young people.

This is symptomatic of the whole approach to the Crime Bill. It's being rushed through Parliament with extra clauses added too late in the day to allow proper debate and discussion."

Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, believes - like his opposite number, Jack Straw - that a strong clampdown on young offenders is a vote-winner.

He has already surprised MPs by announcing that proposals to "name and shame" young thugs, who at present remain anonymous in court cases, and to take away driving licences as a punishment for all kinds of offences will be added as amendments at the Crime Bill's committee stage.

In addition, a Private Member's Bill will seek to ban drinking in public by those under 18 years old. The Crime Bill already includes proposals to use electronic tags to monitor curfew orders placed on persistent petty offenders, such as fine defaulters, aged 16 and over.

Labour argues that tagging can only be part of the solution to deal with young offenders. Jack Straw said: "It can only be a limited response to the crisis in the youth justice system."

However Labour are unwilling to reveal whether they would back or oppose the amendment on juveniles, fearful of being labelled "soft on crime".

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Roddick: My fury over dissident

Ian Burrows

Anita Roddick, founder of the Body Shop, and the family of Ken Saro-Wiwa, the "hanged" Nigerian dissident, reacted with fury and dismay yesterday to claims that he had supported violence and used oil profits to "feather his nest".



The controversy followed an essay by Richard D North, an environmental journalist, which said Mr Saro-Wiwa's past had been misrepresented by Western liberals who supported his campaign against the activities of Shell, the oil company.

Mrs Roddick said that Mr Saro-Wiwa had made the "ultimate act of courage" in dying for his belief that the survival of his Ogoni people was being threatened by oil exploration in the Niger delta.

She accused Mr North of being duped by propaganda issued by the oil company and the

Nigerian military regime. "Ken died for what he believed in," she said. "If he took a few dollars so bloody be it. He died for what he believed in and that's the ultimate act of courage."

His son, Ken Wiwa, was furious at the suggestion in the article that his father had been involved in "incitement to murder" a political rival.

"The tribunal which tried and sentenced my father and the others found no evidence to back the 'incitement to murder' charge," he said. "This is the same tribunal which was condemned universally, by John Major as

"judicial murder", by Michael Baramba, a British QC present at a portion of the trial, and by a UN investigation."

Mr North's essay was published by *The Independent* on the eve of a weekend of international protests to mark the first anniversary of Mr Saro-Wiwa's execution by the Nigerian government.

He said: "I am concerned with the way the Western environmental campaign lobby see the world in desperately and dangerously black-and-white terms."

Vigil for dissident, page 5



Anita Roddick: defending executed dissident

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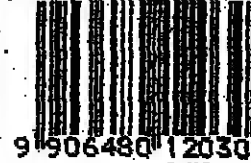
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significant shorts

Dangerous prisoner flees at supermarket

A dangerous prisoner was on the run last night after giving guards the slip during a stop at a supermarket to use the lavatory.

Police warned the public not to approach Hugh MacFarlane, 25, who disappeared from Asda in High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire.

He was being taken from Bullington Prison, Oxfordshire, to Isleworth Crown Court in London, where he was due to appear for breach of a probation order.

MacFarlane was being transported by Premier Prison Services, a company based in Bracknell, Berkshire, which was unable to comment. A police spokesman said: "An extensive search has been launched."

Jailed mother will appeal

Ruth Neave, cleared last week of murdering her son Rikki, six, is to appeal against her seven-year jail sentence for child cruelty and other offences.

Her lawyers believe that the sentence was too long and that the judge at Northampton Crown Court, Mr Justice Popplewell, had not taken sufficient account of the trauma Neave, 28, had suffered as the result of her son's death.

10,000 hours wasted on Bill

The Government wasted nearly 10,000 hours of civil servants' time this year preparing a Bill to stop big companies cutting prices to force competitors out of business, which was dropped from the Queen's Speech, a minister admitted.

The measures in the Bill, which could have curbed Rupert Murdoch's ability to exploit his domination of the newspaper and new television markets, have been promised by the Government since 1988.

This year alone, the civil service devoted 1.4 person-years to drawing up a consultation document in March, and a further 3.2 person-years to a draft Bill in August. John Taylor, trade and industry minister, told Kim Howells, a Labour spokesman, John Rentoul

JG Ballard defends sex and cars film

The controversial film *Crash* was defended by the novelist JG Ballard, on whose book it is based, and by the director, David Cronenberg.

A stylised portrayal of car accidents as erotic, it is to be distributed in Britain by Columbia TriStar if passed for viewing.

Mr Cronenberg defended the film as a "metaphor". Mr Ballard said: "In many ways the film goes even further than the book I wrote. If you read the book there is clearly an attempt going on to justify the extraordinary events being described."

David Lister

'Fitness' issue on war crimes

A jury may be asked to decide whether an 85-year-old man accused in Britain's first war crimes trial is fit to plead when he appears at the Old Bailey next year.

Mr Justice Potts decided to hold two preliminary hearings before Szymon Serafinowicz stands trial on 22 January.

Defence lawyers are expected to urge at the first that the case be thrown out under an abuse of process argument. That is set provisionally for next month. Serafinowicz's fitness to plead will be decided at the second. The retired carpenter from Banstead, Surrey, who was in court yesterday, faces three charges of murdering Jews between 1941 and 1942 in Belarus.

Father of eight spurns home

An unemployed man with eight children is refusing to move his family back into a house the local council has prepared for them by making two properties into one, because it has only one garden. Philip Smith, 41, already has a quarter of an acre garden in Upton Scudamore, near Warrminster, Wiltshire. The conversion cost £45,000.

Philip Smith

The Labour leader told his audience he wanted the alienated youth of the inner cities to re-engage in the democratic life of the nation.

He accused the Tories of wanting to breed cynicism and apathy, and drew attention to *The Independent's* report this week that two million people, mostly in the inner cities, are not registered to vote, and urged his audience to vote for anyone. "I

Ashdown reveals the big hole at the heart of British politics

John Rentoul
Political Correspondent

The big issues of modern politics are being "ducked" in the run-up to the election, spelling disaster for a Labour government if Tony Blair wins, Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, warned last night.

Citing green issues above all as the challenge being side-stepped, Mr Ashdown launched a blistering attack on the "politics of quietude". He told a rally in London: "In the battle of the spin doctors and sound-bites, the really big issues aren't being debated. That, we are told, is the way it must be. It's the only way to win elections."

"Hasn't Bill Clinton's victory proved it? No tough messages

please. Puff small things up into big ones and ignore the really big ones altogether."

In a pointed reference to Mr Blair's drive to appeal to the Tory-voting middle class, he described the lesson Labour seemed to learn from America as: "Don't frighten the horses — above all, don't frighten the middle classes."

He came close to admitting that Mr Blair would win, with another dig at Labour's close links with President Clinton's twice-victorious campaign team. "The politics of quietude may prove — it has proved for President Clinton and Labour hopes it will prove for Tony Blair — a winning strategy for the election. But I cannot think of a worse strategy for a successful gov-



Burning issues: But the 'politics of quietude' prefers to avoid real controversy for fear of frightening the voters

ernment after the election," he said.

He said Britain was "sleep-walking into the next century, and into disasters which are inevitable if we will not face up to what is ahead."

The fierce criticism of Mr Blair's strategy is a significant marker of the distance still remaining between the Liberal Democrats and Labour after a series of recent instances of the two parties working together.

Blair on Major's home ground

John Rentoul
Political Correspondent

Tony Blair laid claim to John Major's home turf last night, speaking to young people in the district, once represented by the Prime Minister as a Lambeth councillor in Brixton, south London.

While the Labour leader's aides cast doubt on the authenticity of Mr Major's claim to humble origins, Mr Blair asserted Labour's right to speak for the deprived inner cities.

He said his mainly black and young audience would have the same question as any other audience: "What difference will Labour make to me and to my community?" And his answer would also be the same: "Young people in Brixton want the same as young people anywhere else — a role in life, a good education, the chance of a job, a life free of crime, and a decent standard of living for themselves and their families."

The Labour leader told his audience he wanted the alienated youth of the inner cities to re-engage in the democratic life of the nation.

He accused the Tories of wanting to breed cynicism and apathy, and drew attention to *The Independent's* report this week that two million people, mostly in the inner cities, are not registered to vote, and urged his audience to vote for anyone. "I



Supporting role: Cherie Blair in Brixton last night where her husband took up a challenge to meet young people

Photograph: Adrian Dennis

would rather someone voted Tory than not at all," he said.

He invoked the example of President Mandela. "If there is anyone who can teach us the value of having a vote it is Nelson Mandela, who fought all his life to bring democracy to his country," he said.

Earlier, writing in the London *Evening Standard*, he signalled

that he thought a directly-elected Mayor of London was more important than a new slimline GLC to reviving interest in voting. "We must improve the quality of our democracy. That is why I am so keen on the idea of elected mayors, and an elected authority for London."

Mr Blair was invited to a question-and-answer session by the Stockwell Park Estate Community Trust, and said he had been "delighted" to accept the challenge. He said a similar invitation to the Prime Minister had been turned down.

Although Mr Major was at the Anglo-French summit yesterday, the invitation was for a debate at any time.

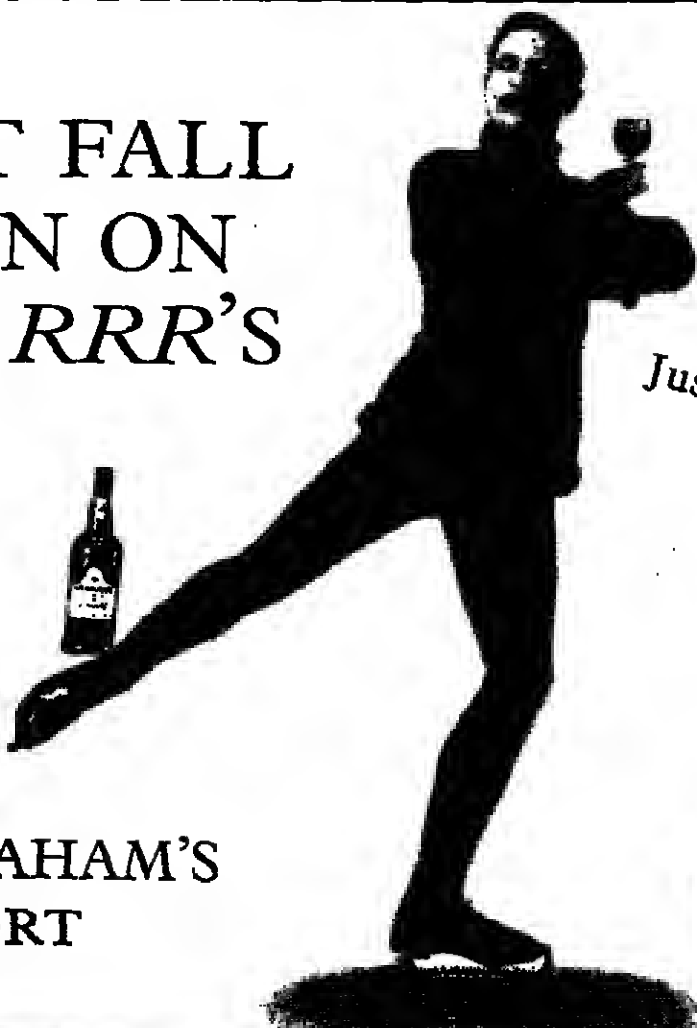
A spokesman for Tony Cen-

tral Office yesterday dismissed suggestions that Mr Major was reluctant to stage a face-to-face debate with Mr Blair. "You only have to look at the record of Labour in Lambeth to know why Mr Major is a Conservative, and to know why Labour policies have been disastrous for the people there," he said.

Mr Major reminded the Tory

conference in Bournemouth last year of his early years in Brixton, immortalised in the political broadcast "The Journey" before the last election, in which he mumbled "It's still there, it's still there", as he drove past the small flat to which his family had been forced to move from leafy Worcester Park by the failure of his father's business.

DON'T FALL DOWN ON YOUR RRR'S



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THE PORT OF AUTHORITY

College staff unite to strike over pay

Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

More than 220 colleges and universities throughout Britain face an unprecedented 24-hour pay strike by 100,000 employees with the threat of worse disruption to come.

Leaders of a whole range of employees from professors to porters yesterday announced a vote in favour of industrial action which will begin with a day-long stoppage on 19 November and continue with indefinite action short of strikes to "gum up the works".

More walkouts are possible and academics at the older universities are considering a plan to disrupt examinations if management refuses to improve its proposals on pay.

Union leaders yesterday said the vote — in protest at a 1.5 per cent offer for most staff and 2.5 per cent for manual workers — was the first time in British academic history that all employees in higher education had opted to strike on the same issue at the same time.

The aim on 19 November is to shut down the whole sector, although turnout in the ballots

varied from 38 per cent to 70 per cent among the eight organisations involved. The polls in favour of strikes varied between 52 per cent and 76 per cent.

Employees' leaders, who have won the support of the National Union of Students, are to mount picket lines on the strike day and expect that some 600-union staff will refuse to cross.

John Akker, general secretary of lecturers' union NATFHE, whose membership is concentrated at the new universities and colleges of further education, said the campaign was aimed at securing a reasonable new offer from management rather than disrupting services to students.

The unions say that pay of employees in the sector varies from an average £7,504 among manual workers, £12,655 for white-collar staff and more than £26,000 a year for top academics. The salaries of senior dons had been tied to high-grade civil servants and MPs, but the Whitehall mandarins were now paid £39,000 a year and parliamentarians £43,000. New lecturers at the older in-

stitutions were paid around £15,000 a year and researchers at the newer establishments earned just £9,000.

Elaine Harrison, head of public service union Unison, said the offer meant only 10p an hour to her members.

"The ballot result sends out a clear message that Unison members are angry with this deplorable and unfair offer. They are sick of bearing the brunt of government cutbacks."

Chris Kaufman of the Transport and General Workers' Union, said that attempts by some institutions to table local offers had been rejected by the unions because they were intent on preserving national pay bargaining. However, such gestures showed there was more money in the system.

Stephen Rouse, chief executive of the Universities and Colleges Employers' Association, said management understood the feelings of staff, but did not have the funds to reward the "magnificent" contribution they had made in increasing productivity. He said there had been a cut in government funding of 2.1 per cent in cash terms.

صلى الله عليه وسلم

Vigils in memory of executed dissident

Ian Burrell

This weekend, the thoughts of Western liberals will be focused on Ken Saro-Wiwa, the Nigerian dissident who was executed a year ago.

In Dublin Sinead O'Connor is giving a concert to his memory, silent vigils will take place in London, and every petrol station in Slovakia will be subjected to picketing by protesters.

The anger of Saro-Wiwa's supporters has been fuelled by a controversial essay written by Richard D North, an environmental journalist, who accused the activist of supporting violent protest and "feathering his own nest" with oil profits.

In Mr North's essay, published by *The Independent* yesterday, Mr Saro-Wiwa was accused of using the campaign of the Ogoni people to stop oil

exploration by Shell in the Niger delta as "a useful route to false and wealth".

He said that the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), which Mr Saro-Wiwa founded, had an "element of sham" and had led to violence by young followers against moderate Ogoni politicians who did not support its agenda.

This accusation was flatly re-

jected yesterday by Ledum Mitee, the British-based acting president of MOSOP, who shared a prison cell with Mr Saro-Wiwa for more than a year.

Mr Mitee defended himself before the Nigerian military-appointed tribunal and was acquitted. Nine other Ogoni activists, including Mr Saro-Wiwa, were convicted and hanged.

Mr Mitee said he was "terri-

bly outraged" by the description of his friend.

"The suggestion that he tried to feather his nest is completely not true. All the while of his public life he did not have any property in Nigeria or anywhere else."

"It was not until later in life when he left the government and went into trade that he was able to make decent money with which he was able to get the

property that he owned. Ken was a very highly-principled person who hated the whole idea of corruption in public and private life. He has demonstrated that in his plays.

"The importance of this weekend is to draw attention to the sacrifice that Ken and the others have made and to ensure that actions are taken so that they did not die in vain."

The controversy over Mr

Saro-Wiwa arose as The Body Shop launched a global week-end of protest in support of the continued struggle of the Ogoni people.

Campaigners are concerned for the safety of 19 Ogoni activists being held in jail in Nigeria. Yesterday it was revealed that relatives of Mr Saro-Wiwa and John Kpume, an Ogoni youth leader who was hanged with him, had filed a federal law-

suit in New York against Royal Dutch Petroleum and Shell Transport and Trading.

The lawsuit alleges that the oil companies played a role in the detention and subsequent hanging of the two men.

A Shell spokesman denied that the company had caused environmental harm but said that the company was now looking for "reconciliation" with the Ogoni people.

Why I can't agree with this tainted account of my father's life

Ken Wiwa

I have three main complaints about Richard D North's article in yesterday's *Independent*. They are serious enough for me to demand a substantial retraction or seek legal action if I am not satisfied that my father's reputation is not stained by unfounded allegations contained in the piece.

The main thrust of my grievance is as follows:

Mr North alludes to the "large house in Surrey" owned by my late father. The definition of large here is highly contentious, and a simple check on the location, value - at time of purchase and current - will only lead your readers to the conclusion that not many, if any, residents of the area could afford to send a child to Eton.

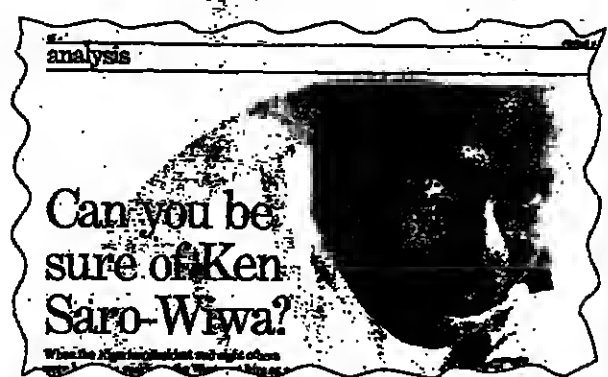
The implication is that my father was very wealthy, but by Nigerian and British standards and the evidence supplied in your piece, he was not. Rather, he falls into the sector of population who invest their hard-earned fortune in their children's future, not on ostentatious living.

Mr North asserts that "within Nigeria he is widely believed to have feathered his nest while managing the Niger-Delta oil port of Bonny during the civil war. It would certainly explain his sudden affluence at that time. If he was a crook, it is no more than Nigeria's expectation of each other."

Widely believed by whom? As a journalist, I am shocked that such a crucial part underpinning the central theme of Mr North's article is not backed by any statement in fact.

For argument's sake, let me put my father's side of the story to you: after the civil war, he worked in the River State government before resigning to go into business in 1973. We continued to live in the spacious former colonial house that came with his government post even after he left office; he retained the property from the government. In 1977, four years after leaving government, having achieved success in his trading business - fuelled by the buoyant economy after the hike in oil prices - my father bought his first house.

Mr North could easily have checked his version of events by



The article by Richard D North in yesterday's *Independent*.

picking up the phone and calling me at *The Guardian*. Or he would have done even better by reading any one of my father's 50 books, where he expounds at considerable length, and at personal cost, on the lack of financial probity in Nigeria. And in this he was forever answering the suspicion of journalists like Mr North by challenging anyone who asked to lay their accounts side-by-side with him and establishing who was the more honest man.

I challenge Mr North to do the same. My father's financial affairs are still there for everyone to inspect. He has nothing to fear on that score.

Finally, Dami Kogbara's quote accusing "Ken of incitement to murder". It is amazing that Mr North does not point out that the tribunal which "tried and sentenced" my father and the others found no evidence to back the "incitement to murder" charge.



Ken Wiwa: North displays a meanness of thought

This is the same tribunal which was condemned universally - by John Major as "judicial murder", by Michael Birtbaum, a British barrister present at a portion of the trial, and by a UN investigation into the case.

Perhaps Dami Kogbara, *The Independent* and Mr North should read the judges' final summing-up in the flawed case. They might find their comments at best ignorant.

Finally, on a more philosophical note, I resent the spin put on the piece.

Surely, as the title of your paper suggests, journalists are instructed to form an opinion without undue influence by interested parties. Yet Mr North flew in Shell helicopters and was shown around by the company.

For an independent assessment of Shell's record in Delta, he might, in passing, have mentioned Shell's own environmentalist, Bopp Van Sessel, who resigned in protest at the company's record in the region. Is this piece fact or Shell's self-serving events? Why do you not make this distinction clear? By the methods which Mr North employs to inform your readers, I am sure he could do doubt that a conflicting view of life at The Ridings School.

Ultimately, by trying to taint my father with the same brush as the so-called "leaders" who have reduced one of the world's largest oil-producing countries to one of the poorest in the world, Mr North displays a meanness of thought of the worst kind.

There are many well-meaning people in Nigeria, those who work hard to try to alleviate the crushing inequalities and meanness in the society. As

my father once said about Nigeria, "the only wrong-doers are those who do no wrong".

It is sad that Mr North cannot recognise the spirit of a man. Yes, my father was no saint. That much I have admitted in many interviews.

Perhaps your readers would be more likely to believe this coming from his son than from the daughter of a man who is a sworn enemy of my father? (But if you believe a man's private life is any indication of his contribution to a society, then at least in your piece you may want to balance Shell's claims by looking into the private morals of former and current Shell executives.)

Finally, my father could hardly be described as "possibly spoken". He spoke with a heavy Nigerian accent, as anyone who knew him or who has heard his comments on Channel 4 documentaries might attest.

It is a small point, but testimony to the blatant bias of Mr North's article.



In memoriam: Supporters of Ken Saro-Wiwa, staging a vigil at Waterloo to mark the first anniversary of his death. Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

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Britons killed in Nigeria airline crash

At least five Britons were killed when a Nigerian airliner crashed only minutes before it was due to land, it was confirmed last night.

The British High Commission in the Nigerian capital Lagos said that five British men were among the 141 people who died when the Boeing 727 came down at about 5pm on Thursday as it was nearing Lagos on an internal flight from the oil city of Port Harcourt.

Commission spokesman John Watam said: "We definitely have five British men confirmed as passengers, but we are trying to get more information on reports there may be a sixth. We understand that the plane crashed about 60 miles from Lagos and part of it has been seen in a large lagoon. The terrain in the area is making it very difficult for rescue teams to reach the crash site and recover bodies and debris."

"We do not know which part of the aircraft is in the water or if any bodies have been recovered. I understand that it is only really accessible by boat."

"We have consular officials at

the scene and are desperately trying to find out as much information as we can about what has happened."

Flight ADC086, operated by Aviation Development Company, had 132 passengers and nine crew on board. Nigerian aviation officials have confirmed there were no survivors.

It has emerged that one of the Britons involved was an English employee of Wireline and Testing, a division of oil services giant Schlumberger. A Schlumberger spokesman in Aberdeen said the man's family were being informed and no details were being released.

Two employees of London-based oil company Halliburton - thought to be an American and a Dutch man - were also on board, but a company spokesman said it had no reports of any Britons being involved.

There are several large oil companies in Port Harcourt, and the flight between the city and Lagos is generally used only by people working in the industry. Nigeria's aviation minister is at the crash scene and a top-level inquiry has been launched.

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news

He harasses me on the phone, sends me goods I don't want, but the police can't do anything

Jojo Moyes

Every time Fiona Watts hears a knock on the door her palms start sweating and she panics. Will it be a taxi? Or a pizza? Or perhaps it will just be the postman, with more junk mail bearing her name.

Either of those things might seem trivial by itself, but Ms Watts has been stalked by third party for three years, in a campaign comprising hundreds of nuisance telephone calls, unwanted taxi and take-away orders, junk mail and having her number published in small advertisements.

"I've kept thinking that at some point he'll get bored, but now he seems to be getting worse. It's affected my job and everything - and he's totally within the law," Ms Watts said.

Despite the distress and inconvenience she has suffered, under existing law, Ms Watts is powerless to do anything about it. And according to Labour's spokeswoman on women's issues, Janet Anderson, whose own anti-stalking Bill was blocked last year, the Government's proposed legislation will enable such forms of harassment to continue.

Ms Watts, an educational programme organiser from Manchester, claims she has suffered the "third-party" harassment since 1993, when she and a flatmate fell out with the man, who cannot be named for legal reasons. At first, she says,



Menace down the line: Stalking by proxy brings nuisance phone calls as well as unsought taxis, pizzas and goods through the post

Photograph: Tony Buckingham

he would telephone and hang up. Assuming that he would get bored, at first they did not act. Then unwanted taxis began arriving at the door, once six arrived within 20 minutes. The

drivers, she said, were "out happy" to find that they had been called out for nothing.

"They take it out on me. I get a tirade of abuse sometimes. I've now got a code with the local

taxi firms but he's using ones further afield. I can't warn every single taxi firm," Ms Watts said. Along with the taxis came the unsolicited takeaway food. Sometimes restaurants called

back to check the order, but most of the time, Ms Watts said, she was again left arguing at the door.

As the telephone calls continued, she enlisted the help of

BT's nuisance call bureau. Unfortunately for Ms Watts, her caller roamed to call from multi-extension company lines, often operated by co-ops, making the calls difficult to trace. The caller, she claims, also worked casually, and has moved companies several times.

The various forms of harassment continued until this year. Then last month Ms Watts' number began appearing in a classified advertisement in the *Manchester Evening News*, offering a room for rent. The bill, in her flatmate's name, was sent to her address.

The newspaper pulled the advertisement when it became aware of the circumstances.

But a spokeswoman said that the sheer weight of advertisements meant that they were often impossible to check out. It has now logged Ms Watts' telephone number to prevent it appearing again.

Ms Watts' latest ordeal has been junk mail. Her harasser fills out coupons in newspapers and she has been receiving "heaps" of junk mail from roofers, mobile phone companies, but most usually concerning life insurance.

"If we don't answer them off the company will follow up with phone calls - this means he gets other people to do the harassing for him. But we haven't changed our number because there would be no point and I

don't want to leave my home." Ms Watts is now hoping that the original coupons, many of which have been sent to her, will provide the breakthrough she needs. But she believes the unwanted attention is not taken seriously by police as it is not conventional stalking.

"But this has affected me very much. The posties are delivering stuff that won't fit through the door. When there are knocks on the door my heart sinks, when the phone goes, when taxis pull up outside my palms start sweating and I panic. My sleeping pattern is a complete disaster."

According to Ms Anderson the Government's proposed legislation appears to contain no definition of stalking, which leaves victims like Ms Watts no remedy apart from expensive injunctions.

Her original anti-stalking Bill, drawn up with the aid of anti-harassment lawyers co-located a catch-all definition which would have made the unwanted attention illegal. It specified someone who "gives unwarranted or unsolicited material at a place where another person lives, works or regularly visits" and acts which are "likely to cause that other person to feel harassed".

"The Government said at that time that he thought the definition was too wide ... but as this case shows, any anti-stalking definition has to be fairly wide," Ms Anderson said yesterday. She added that as with Ms Watts' case, the burden of proof fell too heavily on stalking victims.

A spokeswoman for law firm Lawson-Crutenden, which specialises in harassment cases, said there were many similar cases that were likely to slip through the legislative net. It helped draw up Labour's Bill and had proposed a definition which it believed was workable. "We've been keen to get this sorted as at the moment because people are suffering," she said.

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Own goal: Aaron Young, nine, whose survey damned Gascoigne Photograph: Peter Lea

Gazza gets the boot in playground poll

Richard Smith

The football star Paul Gascoigne received the highest number of votes in a poll of children's views. Here is a child who is saying this man used to be my idol but not any more.

"It would be interesting if Gascoigne was to read Aaron's report, because being condemned by a group of nine-year-olds might shock the young man. Thank goodness there are children like Aaron who understand that kind of behaviour is wrong."

"But for every Aaron there are many boys who have Gascoigne as their hero and therefore consider this behaviour acceptable. Stars like Gascoigne have a moral responsibility and the chap has got to grow up."

"I feel sorry for him, because it's sad and I would certainly want to give him another chance but I don't think I would have picked him this time."

Aaron's mother, Lyn Young, of Rushford, near Evesham, said: "We had been talking about this matter as a family and Aaron was disgusted that Gascoigne was included in the squad even though his problem hurt someone else."

"He has always been a great admirer of Gascoigne's play. But all Aaron's friends are keen football fans and he was conscious it was a bad example to set."

when I heard about the alleged assault on his wife, that put me off," said Aaron, who supports Aston Villa. "I felt very strongly that Gascoigne should not play for England and I wanted to find out what the other children thought."

"I went around the playground asking people and taking notes. I was quite surprised by the results, because I thought Gascoigne would get more support. I think Gascoigne has lost a lot of fans over this."

Altogether, Aaron quizzed 25 people at the school. Among them were three teachers - the deputy head, Stephen Wilkes, was the only staff member weighing in with support for Gascoigne.

All five females questioned by Aaron - including two teachers - agreed that Gascoigne should have been dropped.

The headmistress, Marcia Palmer, said: "The staff didn't put any personal oars in here - Aaron did this purely off his own bat."

"Aaron has what I call a true sportsman's attitude - he is very positive and caring to other people and this is the kind of thing Aaron would feel quite strongly about."

"People need to realise that children do have moral values. Often we under-estimate their ability to know what is right and

wrong - and in some cases adults could do well to take note of their views. Here is a child who is saying this man used to be my idol but not any more."

"It would be interesting if Gascoigne was to read Aaron's report, because being condemned by a group of nine-year-olds might shock the young man. Thank goodness there are children like Aaron who understand that kind of behaviour is wrong."

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England in Georgia, page 30

Dixons

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Tories in a tangle over attack on red tape

John Rentoul
Political Correspondent

The Government's drive to cut red tape has run into the sand as each attempt to lift minor regulations turns into a tangle of new complications.

A report from MPs published this week on the three latest measures reveals they are a far cry from "the biggest bonfire of controls in modern times" promised by Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, two years ago.

The measures have been approved by MPs on the grounds that they "will reduce a burden", but the small print of their report reveals a different picture.

The Government's plan to allow 16- and 17-year-olds to work in pubs "would create several more criminal offences", the report admits. A plan to cut the work of weights and measures inspectors has run into opposition from glassware makers who say it will cost jobs, and may fall foul of European Union law. And a plan to reduce the paperwork required for marriage "is unlikely to produce significant practical benefits", the MPs conclude.

Labour members of the powerful cross-party Deregulation Select Committee, set up last year to scrutinise the campaign against red tape, describe the drive as "a real case of the Government making paperwork for itself".

The promise to "simplify rules and regulations" was one of the central claims of the 1992 Conservative election manifesto. The Prime Minister appointed Mr Heseltine to drive it through and last year he said: "I have made a commitment that we will make one deregulation change every week."

Since April 1995 only 22 orders have actually been made, producing a total annual

cost saving of £50m, the Cabinet Office estimates.

The plan to let 16- and 17-year-olds on approved apprenticeship schemes work in bars is a particularly strange example of "deregulation", as it requires a whole new raft of rules to protect under-age apprentices from exposure to alcohol and to "shield them from situations where customers may become violent and abusive".

If this were not complex enough, the MPs recommend that the order "be amended to provide that apprentices should not be employed in the bar area after 11.30pm".

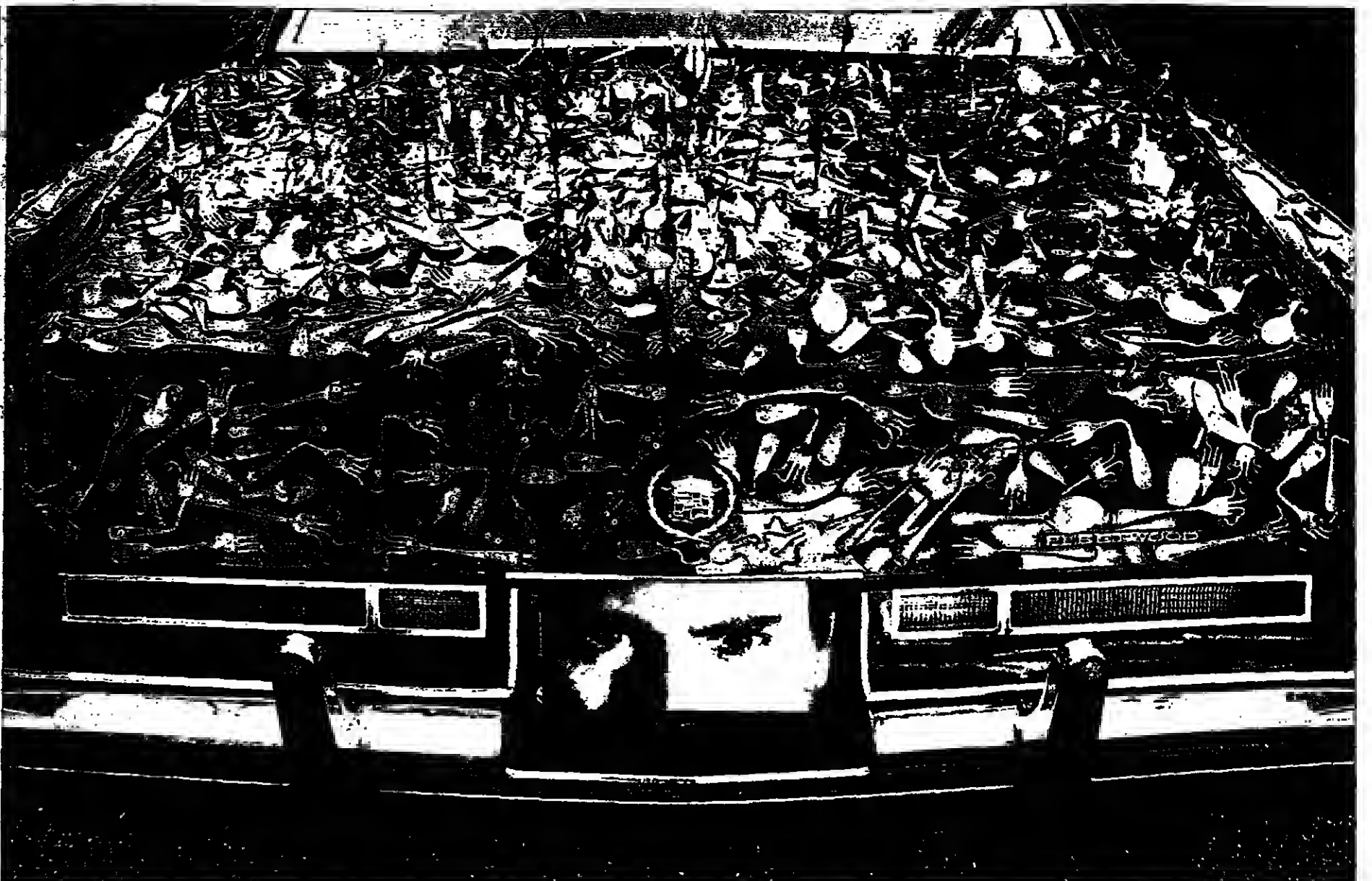
Next, the committee was unable to find out whether the plan to let manufacturers verify their own weighing and measuring equipment subject to spot checks was compatible with the European technical standards directive.

It received several complaints that a different regime in the UK would be a barrier to trade in the European Union, and a glassware makers complained that it would have the unintended effect of costing more and putting its employees out of work.

The third measure, to "extend the validity of the civil notice of marriage from three to 12 months" also ran into trouble when Registrars complained that it would lead to wasted time and money as more couples failed to turn up for marriages which had been booked so long before.

The future of the deregulation initiative is equally small-scale. The Government is still consulting interested parties on "reducing licensing requirements for skin piercing" and "allowing cycle races on built-up roads".

Meanwhile, 18 other measures have completed consultation and are awaiting government decisions.



Kitchen Cadillac: The bonnet of psychic metal-bender Uri Geller's car, covered in a layer of cutlery he has bent that belonged to the rich and famous. The additional body work includes spoons from James Dean, John Lennon and Elvis Presley and forks used by Kennedy and Churchill. Photograph: Tom Pilsten

Carey ducks in clash over gay service

Andrew Brown
Religious Affairs Correspondent

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, yesterday tried to calm the growing row over a lesbian and gay service of thanksgiving to be held in Southwark cathedral next Saturday by distancing himself from the proposed event, while defending the right of the organisers to worship.

The decision to allow the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement (LGCM) to use the cathedral to celebrate their 20th anniversary had been nothing to do with him. "[It] is quite properly, entirely the responsibility of the Provost and Chapter of Southwark cathedral," he said.

"This was not a decision taken by bishops individually or collectively and it does not reflect any change in the position outlined in the House of Bishops' statement on issues in human sexuality in 1991."

The statement he referred to suggested that homosexual relationships among the laity were sometimes acceptable, but never among the clergy. It has been ceaselessly attacked since then as an illogical and unsustainable compromise by both pro- and anti-gay groups.

Dr Carey said yesterday that "the House of Bishops is not about to change the position outlined in that statement... To make a church or cathedral available to Christian people for worship and prayer, or to preach at such a gathering, cannot properly be taken as an endorsement of whatever the congregation wants." Dr Carey's statement continued.

This is believed to be a reference by the decision of the Bishop of Guildford, Dr John Gladwyn, to preach at the service, which will also be attended by an American bishop, the Rt Rev Walter Righter, who was last year acquitted by an American church court of heresy

after he ordained a practising homosexual priest.

The Diocese of Southwark, which covers London south of the Thames, has been riven by the decision to hold the service. Evangelicals collected nearly 100 clergy signatures for a petition against the festival, which they describe as "a celebration of 20 years of gay sex"; supporters collected slightly more.

Some of the largest evangelical parishes are planning to withhold funds from the diocese in protest. One is planning to break off all relations with the Bishop of Southwark, the Rt Rev Roy Williamson, and to place itself under the protection of the Bishop of Fulham, the Rt Rev John Broadhurst.

Dr Carey said he disagreed with "some of the aims of the LGCM... For example, the bishops cannot regard homosexual practice as on a par with heterosexual practice within marriage". But he refused to exclude them from the Church; they are, he said, "Christian people loved by God who are our brothers and sisters in Christ."

To allow them to worship was, he said, "A mark of recognition that followers of Christ should cherish all that they have in common, notwithstanding strong differences of opinion on particular issues."



Carey: Trying to distance himself from gay event

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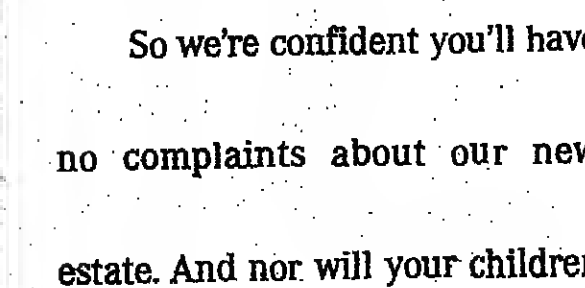
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news

School reopens as boy's mother gives up fight

Fran Abrams
Education Correspondent

Teachers at Manton Junior School in Nottinghamshire will return to work on Monday after the mother of a 10-year-old boy who sparked a strike agreed to move him.

Pamela Cliffe, whose son Matthew Wilson was alleged to have been violent and disruptive, bowed to pressure after the county council announced it was prepared to act outside its powers to remove him if necessary.

The school was closed last week after its governors decided to stop paying for a supply teacher to look after the boy.

Teachers at the school had voted to strike rather than to teach him after governors at the school overturned the head's decision to exclude him.

His mother was adamant that he should return and had said she would seek a judicial review of the case.

However, her solicitor, Stephen Williams, said yesterday that she was not prepared to see the school remain closed any longer.

Mr Williams said she was "battled weary" after nearly two months of dispute. "She feels that no one else seems to have the interests of the children at heart, certainly not the unions or the teachers," he said.

"She feels she has gone as far as she can and is now, reluctantly, going to take him out of the school and make arrangements for him to be transferred elsewhere."

Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters' Union of Women Teachers, welcomed the decision.

"It will be better for the youngster in the long-run. Again, more has been achieved by NASUWT action than all the pious mouthings of politicians about morality," he said. The head teacher, Bill Skelly, shut the school last week on the grounds that he could not guarantee all his pupils' safety, but a staff strike started straight afterwards.

Yesterday he said he hoped the school could return to normal and continue with the task of educating all its pupils. "School will re-open on

Monday and hopefully, the media will respect the right of our pupils to restart their education without the glare of publicity."

Doug McAvoy, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, which represents Mr Skelly, said it was appalling that the dispute had taken so long to resolve. It first blew up in July, but governors decided to pay for a supply teacher to keep Matthew out of lessons.

"Had the head teacher's judgement prevailed earlier, pupils at Manton school would not have had their education disrupted. Matthew would have had his own educational needs met and the adverse publicity would have been avoided," Mr McAvoy said.

Fred Riddell, chairman of Nottinghamshire education authority, had written to the Secretary of State for Education, Gillian Shephard, asking for her backing if the boy was removed from the school.

Its governing body could not legally reconsider their decision not to exclude him, even though the members who blocked it resigned last week.

Beautiful landscape will be quarried to repair old houses



Scene of struggle: Villages such as Wirksworth need slate to maintain their looks, but obtaining it affects the landscape. Photograph: John Voss

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The Link

Running a slate to raise the roof

Stephen Goodwin
Heritage Correspondent

Small-scale quarrying is to be encouraged in some of England's loveliest landscapes to provide stone slates for traditional roofs.

A shortage of the heavy gritstone slate used in the south Pennines has prompted a "Roofs of England" campaign, to be launched at the National Stone Centre at Wirksworth in Derbyshire next Wednesday.

Based on a year of research by English Heritage, Derbyshire County Council and the Peak District National Park, the aim is to revive slate production from hand-worked quarries.

The park faces a dilemma over the slate shortage. It is generally opposed to quarrying - large-scale limestone extraction has left massive scars - yet it insists on traditional materials when old roofs are repaired.

Barns and isolated buildings in the Peak District and elsewhere in the Pennines have been robbed of their roofs to feed a lucrative trade. There has been no quarrying of gritstone for slates in the Peak District for

years and much of the demand has been met by salvaging old slates, often from demolished mills. But as mills have become part of the protected heritage the shortage has increased, exacerbated by the dubious use of slates on new buildings.

Gritstone slates fetch between £200 and £300 a ton. The Duchess of Devonshire, who will be at next week's launch, is among Derbyshire landowners who have had buildings stripped by slate thieves.

Up to three-quarters of an inch thick, gritstone slates are laid with the biggest above the eaves and diminishing in size to the ridge. An eaves slate can be five feet square and take two men to lift. Seven generic types of gritstone have been identified in roofs in the south Pennines.

The project team has managed to acquire new slate from a two-man quarry west of Sheffield. Though not in the past used for roof slates, the quarry yielded stone capable of being cut for eaves. The campaign will encourage other small quarries to open for slate production, including those in the Cotswolds.

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Voters see Blair as leader of centre

John Rentoul
Political Correspondent

Tony Blair's claim to have taken over the centre ground of British politics has been boosted by research showing voters see themselves as much closer to Labour than the Conservatives on key policy issues.

Voters see themselves as close to Labour even on Europe, traditionally a strong Tory issue and one they hope to exploit in the election. The study, by John Curtice, senior lecturer at Strathclyde University, suggests Tory divisions on the issue mean they are not benefiting from the growing Euroscepticism of the public.

At the last election voters tended to place themselves halfway between Labour and the Tories on most policies, but since then Labour is perceived to have moved towards the centre, while the Tories have lurched to the right. According to the study the electorate, meanwhile, has tended to move slightly to the left, which means that on many issues the average voter is now closely aligned with Labour.

On Europe, the picture is different. Labour is seen to have moved towards favouring closer ties with Europe, while both the Tories and the electorate themselves are seen as having moved in a sceptical direction. On average, voters are even more sceptical than the Tories, who are in turn seen as more sceptical than Labour.

But the surprising finding is that more voters say they are closer to Labour's position on Europe than to the Tories. This summer, the study found 41 per cent of voters thought they were closest to Labour, and 31 per cent closest to the Tories.

Further analysis of the same data, by Geoff Evans, of Nuffield College, Oxford, suggests an explanation for this un-

expected finding. Pro-European voters tend to think the Tories are anti-European, while anti-European voters tend to believe they are pro-European.

Views of where Labour stands on Europe, on the other hand, do not seem to depend on voters' own prejudices.

This reversal of the position at the last election, when voters tended to think John Major represented their views on Europe, appears to have been driven by the Tory split on the issue, which has left neither side satisfied.

On other key issues, voters not only assign themselves to a position on the spectrum close to Labour, but also overwhelmingly see themselves as closer to Labour than the Tories. On the other four issues examined, between 45 and 53 per cent of voters described themselves as "closest to Labour".

Mr Curtice said yesterday: "If elections are won by the policy positions of the parties, we can all go home now." Labour is seen as having moved away from support for higher taxes and public spending. Interviewees were asked in 1992 and again this year to give Labour a score, where zero meant higher taxes and higher spending on health and social services, and 10 meant lower taxes and lower spending. In the four years since the last election, Labour's average score rose from 2.8 to 3.4, the Tories' rose from 7.0 to 7.6, and the average score awarded by voters to themselves fell from 4.2 to 3.9.

On Europe, where zero meant "unite fully with the European Union" and 10 meant "protect the UK's independence from the EU", Labour moved from 5.2 to 4.7, while the Tories' average score moved from 5.6 to 5.9. The average for voters moved more sharply in a sceptical direction, from 6.0 to 6.9.

Grape expectations are met as hammer falls on vintage collection of wine labels



Glittering prizes: Thomas Barlow, a collector, examining wine labels at Phillips auctioneers in London which featured yesterday in a fine-silver sale. They were among two collections, one of which, comprising more than 120 items, was amassed by Bernard Watney, an ardent connoisseur of silver and porcelain labels. Photograph: Adrian Dennis

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international

West impotent as war engulfs Zaire

Cold shoulder for French initiative

Mary Dejevsky
Bordeaux

France appeared yesterday to have failed in its bid to muster a multinational force, with US backing, to intervene in the border region of eastern Zaire. A statement issued during the French-British summit in Bordeaux said only that the two countries had agreed to "co-ordinate their efforts closely, especially within the framework of the UN Security Council and the European Union" to ensure that humanitarian aid was able to reach refugees in Zaire, but it made no mention of any military contingent or any immediate emergency operation.

The wording of the statement suggested that all further action would be referred to international organisations, and would therefore take time. French sources later conceded that France had "experienced difficulty" in persuading other countries of direct intervention with a military element. Earlier, it had been made clear that France would not take any unilateral military action.

The Foreign Secretary, Malcolm

'There is extreme urgency. These people have a right to international help and protection'

Rifkind, said later that Britain did not "rule out" a "military dimension" if this was required to ensure the provision of aid and food. He noted, however, that there were many questions still to be answered including: "What is the best way of ensuring that the suffering can be ameliorated... does that require a military contribution from the international community? If it does, should the UK be involved?"

He emphasised that a political solution "covering Rwanda, Burundi and that part of Zaire" was also required, but that this would take some time to work out and was primarily a matter for the countries of the region. "If the international community can help," he added, then it had an obligation to do so.

The joint French-British statement represented a setback for France, which had obtained the agreement of Spain to the dispatch of a multinational military contingent to Zaire at the French-Spanish summit in Marseilles earlier this week.

All official British statements in recent days have stressed the complexity of the political situation in Zaire and the need to have the agreement of all countries in the region before action was taken involving troops. How difficult this could be to obtain became apparent yesterday, when Rwanda said it would accept a "fully neutral" European and African force, but implied that French and Belgian participation would not be welcome.

France is currently sheltering President Mobutu of Zaire, who arrived from Switzerland at the beginning of the week and is now staying at his villa on the Riviera. France also revealed yesterday that its invitation to the US to join a multinational effort had been met with a list of 30 questions that it wanted to be answered first. The French foreign minister, Hervé de Charette, said France had sent back "precise replies" on all points.

The president of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Cornelio Sommaruga, called yesterday for Western military intervention to help aid agencies gain safe access to 1 million refugees in east Zaire.

"There is no other option," he said after a news conference on the humanitarian crisis, when asked if he thought Western military intervention was needed. Mr Sommaruga appealed to the UN Security Council to take necessary measures urgently and said Chapter Seven of the UN charter, which authorises member states to use military force, was not ruled out.

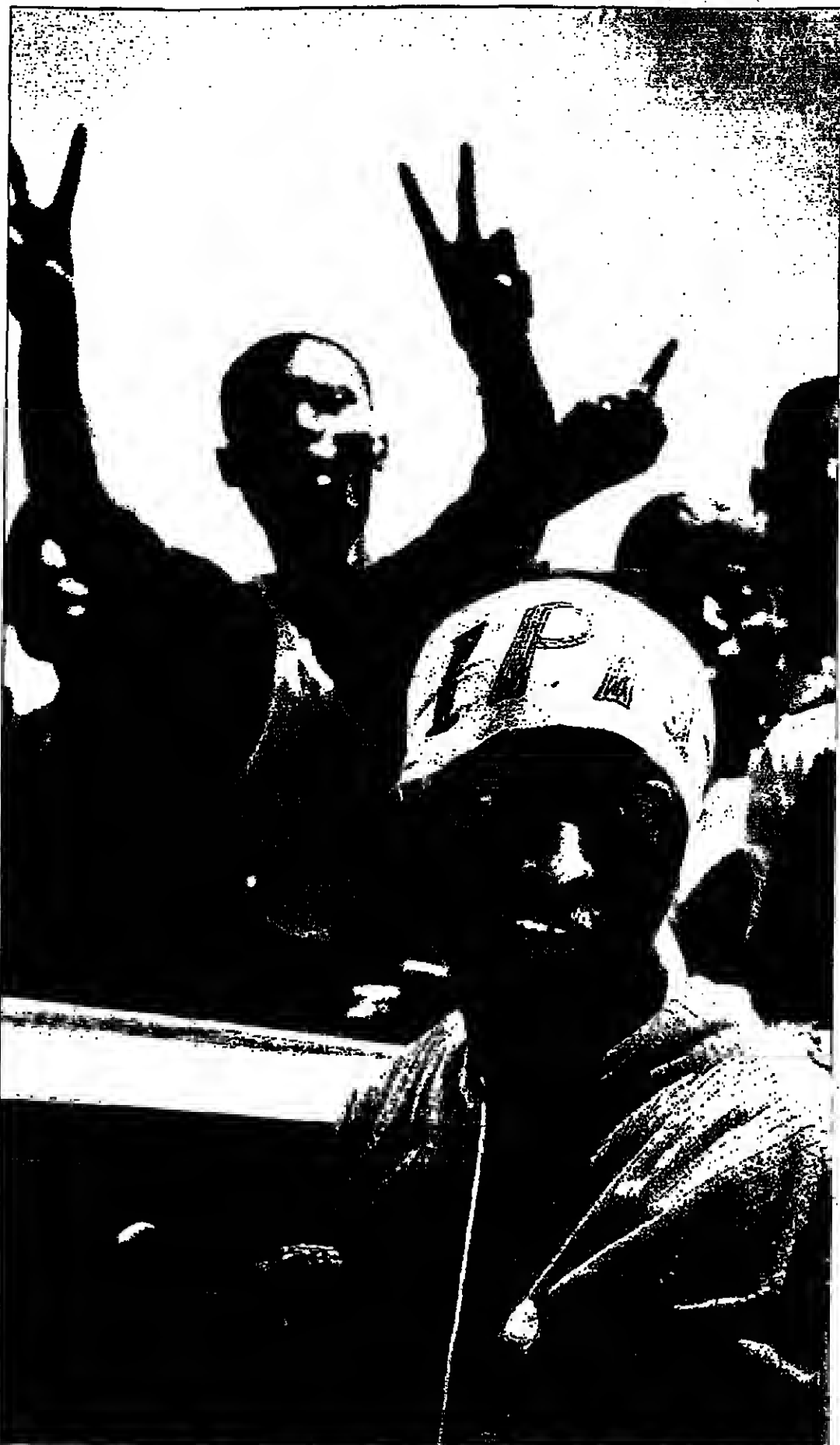
"There is an extreme urgency. The victims cannot wait any longer. Time is passing," he said. "These people have a right to international assistance and protection."

The ICRC chief said his agency and other relief organisations were ready to go into eastern Zaire if their basic security was assured. "We had to quit the region because of pillage, looting and chaos - not because of the conflict," he said.

Two leading Zairean opposition parties said yesterday they opposed foreign military intervention in the east of the country to allow distribution of aid to hundreds of thousands of refugees.

The Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS) and Democratic Christian Social Party (PDSC) said aid should be distributed in Rwanda and Burundi, not Zaire.

spokeswoman Justine M'Poyo Kasu-Vubu said the refugees - mainly ethnic Hutus who fled the two countries after bloody ethnic conflict there - would be forced to return to their homelands if the aid was there.



Voice of protest: Zairean students demonstrate at Kinshasa University. They later occupied the parliament building in protest at the government's handling of the crisis in the east. Photograph: AP

Killing returns to refugee camps

Mary Brad
Giseryi

Outside military intervention looked certain to be needed to save 700,000 Rwandan refugees trapped by fighting in eastern Zaire as it became apparent that the 1994 Rwandan civil war has been resurrected on Zairean soil.

Zairean rebels - backed by Rwanda's Tutsi-led government - are attacking Mugunga refugee camps, 10 kilometres outside Goma, the town taken by the rebels at the weekend.

Their principal opponent appears not to be Zairean troops but the Interahamwe, the militias which ran the refugee camps set up for millions of Rwandan Hutus who fled their country after the genocide of 800,000 Tutsis in 1994. Fire was being returned from the camps.

In the settling of old Rwandan scores, refugees are being used as hostages by the Interahamwe. The war raging on the outskirts of Goma has cut Mugunga off and aid workers were evacuated across the border to Rwanda when Goma fell.

What is happening in Mugunga is invisible to the outside world - journalists cannot reach the area - but those fleeing the area report that the Interahamwe has surrounded the camp, now believed to be a centre for up to 500,000 refugees, many of whom have fled there from camps further north. More than 200,000 others are believed to be trapped by fighting in the region.

Sergio Vieira de Mello, the assistant high commissioner for the UNHCR, said earlier this week that once agreements had been reached with the Zairean and Rwandan governments and the rebels, no external military force would be needed for safe provision of aid for the refugees. The emergence of the Interahamwe as a force strong enough and sufficiently armed to make a stand against the rebels almost certainly removes that option if aid is to reach the refugees in time.

"A few days ago it looked as if the Interahamwe was not a specific threat but it now looks more likely that military intervention is needed," said a senior aid official. "Even if the rebels took the camp tomorrow there would be a continuing threat of Interahamwe ambushes and attacks." The French have offered to mount a military operation but it has been rejected by the Rwandan government because of past French support for the Rwandan Hutus.

Across the Zairean border in Giseryi, Ray Wilkinson, spokesman for UNHCR yesterday repeated his warning that the international community must reach a decision about

the crisis this week or watch hundreds of thousands die.

It would take a minimum of 14 days to launch a rescue. Even then hundreds if not thousands will have died of starvation, thirst and diseases like cholera. Children and the elderly will be the first victims. The UNHCR is ready to move with a plan which combines emergency food supplies with "safe corridors" through which refugees could return to Rwanda. So far that is what they have resolutely refused to do.

Aid workers and the UNHCR were aware that the Interahamwe have taken control of the camps and was storing arms. It was clear that the Hutu social structures had survived the mass exodus and that the old leaders were still in place.

The Interahamwe terrorised the refugees. When they were unconvinced by warnings that Tutsis would murder them if they went home they were lynched as a warning to others. The militias are almost certainly using the same methods to keep trapped refugees under control.

"When refugees try to leave to return to Rwanda they were threatened

In the settling of old Rwandan scores, refugees are being used as hostages by the Interahamwe

with guns and grenades," said Mr Wilkinson. Angry criticism that the UNHCR continued to feed the Interahamwe in the camps he said that the commission asked the UN Security Council in 1994 to send an international police force to rid the camps of the militias but the request was turned down.

Meanwhile conditions in Goma, the third major town in eastern Zaire to be taken by the rebels, are rapidly deteriorating. Food is running dangerously short. Everyday crowds of local people fight in the squalid streets for UN supplies once intended for the refugee camps.

Riots broke out yesterday when people raided UN supply stores and they were fired upon and beaten up by rebel soldiers.

The UN food supplies will also run out soon and when they do the rebels will face the problem of controlling a desperate local population, which looted for days after the taking of the town, while continuing to fight the Interahamwe.

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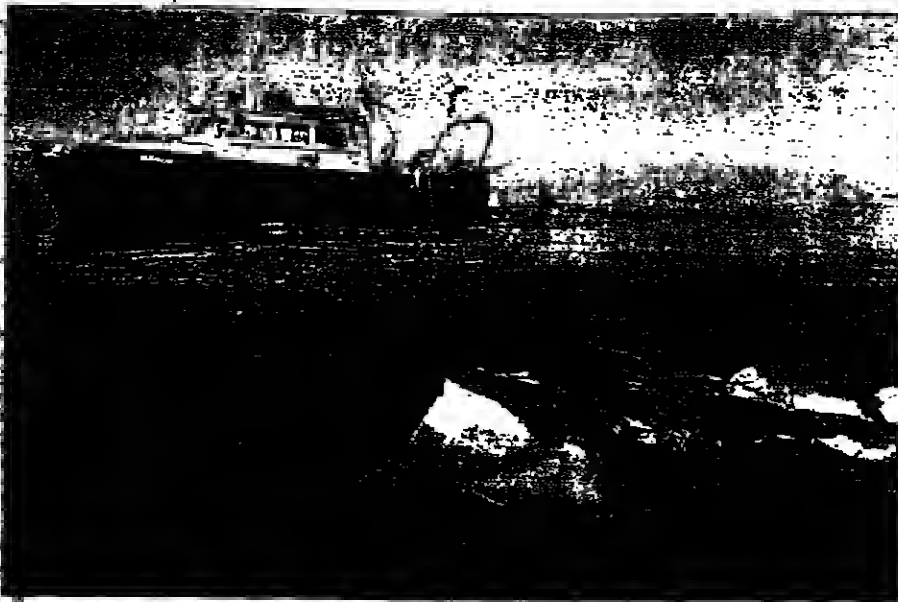
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TWA 800: friendly fire claim resurfaces



Debris from the plane (left) and Pierre Salinger yesterday with a photograph and documents which, he said, show that a US Navy missile was responsible for the disaster

David Osborne
New York

It is a rumour that has been around for as long as the July crash of TWA 800 has been confounding investigators. Just when it seemed to be withering, along comes a well-known mouth and some interesting timing, and it is reignited.

The rumour is that the plane was shot down by a US Navy missile. The mouth belongs to

Pierre Salinger, former spokesman for President Kennedy and until 1983 a reporter for ABC television. At a convention of airline executives in Cannes on Thursday he said he had documents proving "friendly fire" was to blame. "The truth must come out," he said, brandishing two pieces of paper, allegedly written by an American but handed him by a French agent.

The papers, which he has offered to surrender to the FBI,

describe how a Navy ship off Long Island fired a missile, believing no commercial traffic was flying below 21,000 feet, when in fact TWA 800 had reached only 13,000 feet.

Yesterday Mr Salinger said he received the papers five weeks ago but had been approached by "very important people" asking him not to release them until after Thursday's presidential election, for fear the disclosure would alter its course.

"If the news came out that an American naval ship shot down that plane it could... have an effect on the election," he said.

The FBI denied the implied cover-up. James Kallstrom, the assistant director leading the inquiry, said investigators "have absolutely not one shred of evidence that it happened or it could have happened". A White House statement said: "We have ruled out the responsibility of friendly fire."

Of three scenarios still being considered - a bomb detonated on board, a hit by a missile, or mechanical failure - it is the last that has been gaining ground recently.

Attention has focused on the possibility that fumes in the plane's central fuel tank ignited and triggered an explosion. This week investigators disclosed that, with 95 per cent of the plane reassembled, there was no place in the fuselage

through which a metal rod could be passed and through which a missile might have travelled.

Mr Salinger may well be genuine in wanting to help resolve the investigation. But whether he knew it or not, he was also pushing at a series of open doors.

Instantly receptive, for example, will have been his immediate audience. The airline industry would like nothing

more than for evidence to surface absolving it of responsibility for the crash. A finding of mechanical failure would instantly spell lawsuits.

For the wider public, Mr Salinger might as well be offering chocolate to children. The fate of TWA 800 long ago attained unsolved-mystery status and, like all mysteries, it is a breeding-ground for conspiracy theories. And they do not get much better than this one,

suggesting the killing of American citizens by their own government and a cover-up at the highest levels.

But less excitable souls might ask the obvious questions: what motive could there be to try to smother so terrible an event? And could a cover-up have worked so effectively, with many agencies and the military involved in the investigation and every US news organisation sniffing every angle?

Clinton tees off with a new chief

Rupert Cornwell
Washington

Bill Clinton yesterday named his longtime associate, golfing partner and confidant, Erskine Bowles, to replace Leon Panetta as his chief of staff - the most powerful position at the White House after that of the President himself.

Only after much pressure did Mr Clinton prevail on the 51-year-old North Carolina businessman to leave a new investment banking venture and return to the White House, where he was deputy chief of staff under Mr Panetta for much of last year.

Even after his return to the private sector, however, the President used Mr Bowles for particularly delicate assignments, among them persuading Mr Clinton's former top political consultant, Dick Morris, to resign at once following the revelation of his affair with a Washington prostitute.

With the appointment of the popular Mr Bowles, from the outset Mr Clinton's preferred choice of successor to Mr Panetta, the President has plugged the first of the holes that have opened to his administration in the immediate wake of his election victory.

Yesterday the Labour Secretary, Robert Reich, announced that he planned to step down, bringing the number of departing Cabinet members to six.

Apart from Mr Panetta, widely rumoured to be planning a run for the California governorship in 1998, other top White House aides expected to leave include Laura Tyson, Mr Clinton's chief economic adviser, and Anthony Lake, the National Security Adviser.

Though reshuffles by a re-elected president are standard procedure, this will need to be more comprehensive than most.

Three factors are responsible: sheer exhaustion, the lure of far better-paying jobs in the private sector, and fear of being distracted by, or trapped in, the ethics investigations which may be a leitmotif of this particular second term.

But Mr Clinton has clearly learnt lessons since the chaotic transition after he first won the presidency in 1992.

This time, he is moving more quickly to rebuild the White House staff than his Cabinet, a reversal from four years ago, when his obsession with choosing a diverse administration that "looks like America" led to the hasty, last-minute assembling of a slipshod White House team.

The latter's blunders - that ranged from the travel-office scandal to the FBI files fiasco - haunt President Clinton to this day.

This time, the key Cabinet appointments may wait several weeks as Mr Clinton, in his own words, "casts a wide net".

Faced once again with a hostile Congress, the President would like to appoint at least one Republican to a senior national security post, in the hope of fostering a less partisan relationship with Capitol Hill.

The most likely choices are Senator Richard Lugar of Indiana, or outgoing Senator William Cohen of Maine.

Retired general Colin Powell is a less likely contender, given Vice-President Al Gore's understandable reluctance to see a top job going to the man who could well be his most dangerous Republican opponent in the 2000 presidential race.

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Forty years on, Cuba's leader updates image with suits, CNN and a papal visit

Castro runs Pinochet out of town

Phil Davison
Latin America Correspondent

It was a classic case of "this town ain't big enough for both of us". And who, but one man, could have driven Chilean strongman General Augusto Pinochet from his own town? Fidel Castro, that's who.

Gen Pinochet, former dictator and still armed forces commander, chose to leave Chile's capital, Santiago, this weekend to avoid meeting the Cuban leader during the Sixth Ibero-American Summit - attended by heads of state or government from Spain, Portugal and Latin American nations.

The General and Chilean air force chief Fernando Rojas, who would have had to greet Mr Castro with military honours, suddenly remembered a previous engagement - military exercises in northern Chile, which will last until Tuesday, the day the Cuban leader leaves.

Aged 70, and pushing four decades in power, *el Comandante* still has the power to infuriate and mesmerise. His pending arrival today is already the focus of the Santiago meeting, just as he is bound to steal the show in Rome next week at the World Food Summit of the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation.

Sometime during the 13-17 November Rome summit, he is expected to have an historic audience in the Vatican with Pope

John Paul II, the man who helped topple communism in his native Poland. Diplomatic sources say Mr Castro will almost certainly invite the Pope to Cuba - the only Spanish-speaking Latin American country he has never visited - by the end of next summer. It is part of a new *abertura* (opening up) by Mr Castro in economics and religion, a trend which he has yet to follow in the political sector, where the Communist Party continues to reign supreme.

At the Vatican, you can be sure it will be "el Presidente" Castro who calls on the Pope, not "el Jefe Maximo" (the renowned olive fatigues) will be cast aside for a respectful and diplomatic dark suit.

As part of his "New Man" image, Mr Castro took to wearing civilian suits last year during overseas trips. The military gear he retains for domestic consumption. Some believe he is at last trying to move with the times, to soften his traditional Marxism and give the world less reason to ostracise and isolate him. Others say he simply fears he will go down in history as a stubborn dictator who left his country starving.

Mr Castro's latest diplomatic offensive, likely to be hampered home in Santiago and in Rome, may specifically be aimed at keeping the rest of the world from backing US policy on Cuba. A Bill Clinton campaign to persuade Europe to

join a "choir for democracy" in Cuba could pick up steam after Mr Clinton hinted he may delay or veto parts of the so-called Helms-Burton law criticised by Europe, Canada and others for affecting their trade.

US officials were delighted by a speech by Sir Leon Brittan in New York on Thursday, in which he said "we believe very strongly that Europe and the United States should work together as soon as possible to nurture democracy, freedom and human rights" in Cuba.

Mr Castro's latest concession came on Thursday when his government announced it would allow the US TV network CNN to open a bureau in Havana. US media have been barred from being based in Cuba since shortly after the 1959 revolution, although the island authorities regularly allow American correspondents in on temporary working visas.

Ironically, CNN is so far unable to accept Mr Castro's offer. Under US sanctions, American citizens cannot work in Cuba, and the TV network will have to await permission - a tricky decision for President Bill Clinton while he is tightening the economic screws on the island.

The controversial Helms-Burton law would allow American media to operate in Cuba but on condition that Cuba does not interfere with media run by Cuban exile groups.



Batman: A suit-wearing Fidel Castro on a previous visit to New York. Photograph: Reuters

Slovenes look to the West as polls open

Tony Barber
Europe Editor

War is a distant memory in Slovenia this weekend, as voters go to the polls in the country's second general elections since declaring independence from former Yugoslavia in 1991.

While Bosnia, Croatia, Macedonia and rump Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) have all experienced political violence or full-scale war in the last five years, Slovenia has been fortunate enough to escape such convulsions since fighting a brief but bitter battle in June and July 1991 to evict the Serbian-led Yugoslav army.

For the first time since 1918, when Slovenia was incorporated into the first of this century's three Yugoslav states, the little Alpine country of 2 million people has slipped free from its Balkan moorings. Slovenia now has every chance of joining the Western economic and security institutions - above all the European Union and Nato - to which it feels it belongs by virtue of its culture, geography and present high standards of democracy and civil rights.

The outgoing US Defense Secretary, William Perry, was full of praise when he visited Ljubljana last year, and compared Slovenia with other former Communist countries applying to join Nato. "Of all these countries, I believe that Slovenia has made perhaps the greatest progress in the transition to democracy, the transition to a market economy, and the smooth turnover of the military to civilian control."

The main contenders in the

election are the centre-left Liberal Democrats, who are the largest party in the coalition government, and an opposition alliance known as Slovenian Spring. This includes the People's Party, a rightist party with strong support among farmers, the conservative Christian Democrats and the centre-right Social Democrats.

The Liberal Democrat leader, Janez Drnovsek, who was president of Communist Yugoslavia in its dying years, has been Slovenia's prime minister since 1992. He has campaigned on a platform of completing Slovenia's integration into Europe and restructuring the economy.

He argues that, if Slovenian Spring came to power, the three-party coalition would offer nothing but "experimentation and preoccupation with the past". This refers in part to the Christian Democrats' campaign promise to seek the restoration of land and property to the Roman Catholic church, which was dispossessed after the Communist takeover in 1945.

The opposition contends that, despite economic growth of 3.5 per cent last year, the economy is not as healthy as Mr Drnovsek likes to suggest. Public spending has risen substantially as public sector strikes have forced higher wages, and annual inflation edged up last month to 9.7 per cent, well above the EU average.

Polls suggest the likeliest outcome is a qualified victory for the Liberal Democrats, who would then need to forge a coalition with one or two of the rightist parties.

Beer pioneer sees profits on tap in sparkling Georgia



Candlelit trimmer: A Georgian hairdresser cutting her client's hair during one of Tbilisi's regular blackouts yesterday. Photograph: Reuters

Football fans arriving in Tbilisi today will be able to sup locally-made English ale, reports **Hugh Pope**

Tbilisi — Entrepreneur Nick Carratu is only 29 years old. But that is just the twenty-something age you need to make it in the bustling new atmosphere of peace and business in the former Soviet Republic of Georgia.

The youngest provincial governor of this Caucasus mountain country is now 26. The president of its most successful private company is 29. President Eduard Shevardnadze's, hottest heir-apparent, Parliamentary Chairman Zurab Zhivlad, is 32. However, Mr Carratu is British. And he is doing very nicely with an enterprising export: a microbrewery from Warrington. With its three tastefully exposed vats, he ferments a thick porter that used to win Carratu prizes as "Blunderbus", but has been renamed "Black Panther".

"Goes down well, doesn't it?" said

Mr Carratu, offering a pint drawn from a bar in a courtyard garden just off Tbilisi's main boulevard.

The unique pub is not only for English fans coming to watch today's World Cup qualifier against Georgia. Locals are also soaking up the unusually tasty beer, which sells cheaper than the dominant imports of canned Turkish lager.

For Mr Carratu, his Georgian partners and a whole new generation of investors in everything from tea packaging to power stations, this is just the beginning. "The investment climate here is fantastic," Mr Carratu said. "There are all the opportunities of Russia a few years ago but without the competition and, for now, without the mafias."

However, not all foreign investors in Georgia are so upbeat, especially

those who lived through the years of paramilitary anarchy. Back then, pistol-toting mafia bosses fought battles through the lobby of Tbilisi's main hotel and gunmen raided foreign-owned wine bottlers, demanding payoffs of 100 cases at a time.

Because of Georgia's old reputation - and the fact it has just five million people - big investors are still rare. Many are waiting to see the symbolic vote of Western confidence: the start of work on a trans-Georgia-oil pipeline from Azerbaijan. It is now almost certain to be completed in the next 18 months.

Georgia has attracted an idiosyncratic hunch of investors of the kind who have sought their fortunes all over eastern Europe this decade. Mr Carratu, for instance, was trained by the British army to speak Russian for

work in Cold War Berlin. There is a former German MP and television filmmaker who has turned travel agent with an ambition to travel every one of the country's pot-holed roads.

An American consortium including former US Secretary of State George Shultz is moving into the wine business.

An enigmatic Swiss-Israeli concern may have stumbled on to large reserves of natural gas.

The queen of the foreign investors is Betsy Haskell, a Washington political lobbyist invited to Georgia in 1991 and who never really left. Now she runs an estate agency and a guest house, whose "rough deck" restaurant overlooking the flickering lights of the capital is the Rick's Bar of Georgia, attracting spies, diplomats, aid workers and

even a few businessmen writing e-mail letters home to their families.

"There are about 10 of us investors here now," Mrs Haskell said. "The moment Shevardnadze got elected, \$10,000 apartments shot up to \$50,000. It's all booming. This place is really taking off. People really believe it is going to work."

If Mr Carratu's experience is anything to go by, Ms Haskell's bar should soon be filling up. He and his partners decided to invest in March and their brewery was up and running by July. "The main delays were manufacturing the brewery in England, and the biggest problems with corrupt officials was transporting through Turkey. Now our only problem is to sell as much beer as possible," he said.

Football: sport, page 30

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Imran Khan makes his pitch for power

Tim McGirk
Islamabad

Imran Khan, the Pakistani sports hero, is about to start a new game, one far more savage than cricket. After years of refusing to enter Pakistan's bruising politics, Mr Khan yesterday said he will stand for election to become the country's next prime minister.

His newly-formed Justice Movement party will contest the elections on 3 February for the National Assembly, though Mr Khan will have only the slimmest chance of winning. The vote is being called early, after the President, Farooq Leghari, on Tuesday dismissed Benazir Bhutto's government for suspected corruption.

"It's true I never wanted to come into politics, but we feel it's time to protect the people from this corrupt mafia," Mr Khan said. "The other politi-

cians only select people for government posts who are their relatives or sycophants." Mr Khan said he supported the removal of Ms Bhutto. The country had to be "salvaged from sordid opportunism".

The cricket star is delaying the start of his campaign until after he returns from Britain where his wife, Jemima, the daughter of multi-millionaire Sir James Goldsmith, is expecting a baby "at any moment". Mr Khan denied this being a foreign wife (Jemima, at 22, is half his age) would hinder his election chances. "Westerners seem to find this very surprising, but my wife has been accepted easily here in Pakistan," he said.

Mr Khan launched his party last spring, when a bomb exploded in the lobby of his cancer charity hospital in Lahore, killing several people and injuring many. He implied that Ms Bhutto's party might

have planted the bomb to scare him into ceasing his criticisms of the premier. Soon after, he threw himself into a campaign to have her removed from office. Throughout the last few months, Mr Khan has been travelling doggedly across the country, holding rallies and denouncing Ms Bhutto and her husband, the former investment minister, Mr Zardari, whom he decried as the "World Cup saviour of corruption".

So far, his rallies have been sparsely attended. Most of his followers are cricket-mad youths, below the voting age. He has an image problem, too. Many Pakistanis see him as honest and courageous but naive. "I know my limitations. But I feel I'm better than the lot of them," he said yesterday. To his advantage, many Pakistanis are so disheartened with Ms Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party

and the opposition Pakistan Muslim League of the former prime minister, Nawaz Sharif, that they might opt for Mr Khan.

However, rural Pakistan is still in the grip of feudal landlords and tribal chieftains. It is they who can deliver thousands of votes, and without their support, without playing the game of influence-peddling, Mr Khan may end up with his reputation unstained but with only a few seats in parliament.

The country's new caretaker Prime Minister, Mervat Khan, 80, is refusing to move into Ms Bhutto's grand, official residence, preferring to stay in his two-room bungalow. Pakistanis, long accustomed to Ms Bhutto's style of Moghul hauteur, were stunned to see a newspaper photograph yesterday of Mr Khan tottering his way to an economy-class seat on a flight to Lahore.



Going in to bat: Imran Khan with his wife, Jemima. He is delaying the launch of his electoral campaign until after the birth of the couple's baby, which he says is 'due at any moment'. Photograph: Brendon Monks

Indian state battles to aid cyclone victims

Dev Varam
of Reuters

Hyderabad - Indian authorities scrambled to launch rescue operations yesterday after as many as 1,000 people were feared killed by a cyclone that lashed the southern state of Andhra Pradesh. Communications and transport routes to the worst-affected areas were disrupted. Torrents have swept away bridges, while winds threw trees across highways and blew down telephone lines.

Police and troops battled swirling flood waters to reach coastal villages; helicopters dropped food and drinking water to the stranded. V Chandrababu Naidu, the state's Chief Minister, said after an aerial survey that the death-toll could reach 1,000. "The rice bowl of the state looks like a burial ground," he said.

The cyclone destroyed houses, livestock and crops. The number of homes destroyed or damaged was put at 400,000; several thousand people were injured. The United News of India said seven people had been admitted to hospital with symptoms similar to cholera, as health workers faced a possible epidemic.

The cyclone, with winds up to 110 mph, hit the coast on Wednesday at the port of Kakinada. Waves swept up to three miles inland, submerging towns

and villages. About 3.5 million people live in the Konaseema region around the Godavari delta south of Kakinada, which took the brunt of the storm, which moved inland before petering out. Two million people were affected by the disaster.

About 100 soldiers and eight doctors had fanned out in East Godavari to begin relief operations, an official said. Six helicopters were flying continuous trips to drop supplies to stranded villagers.

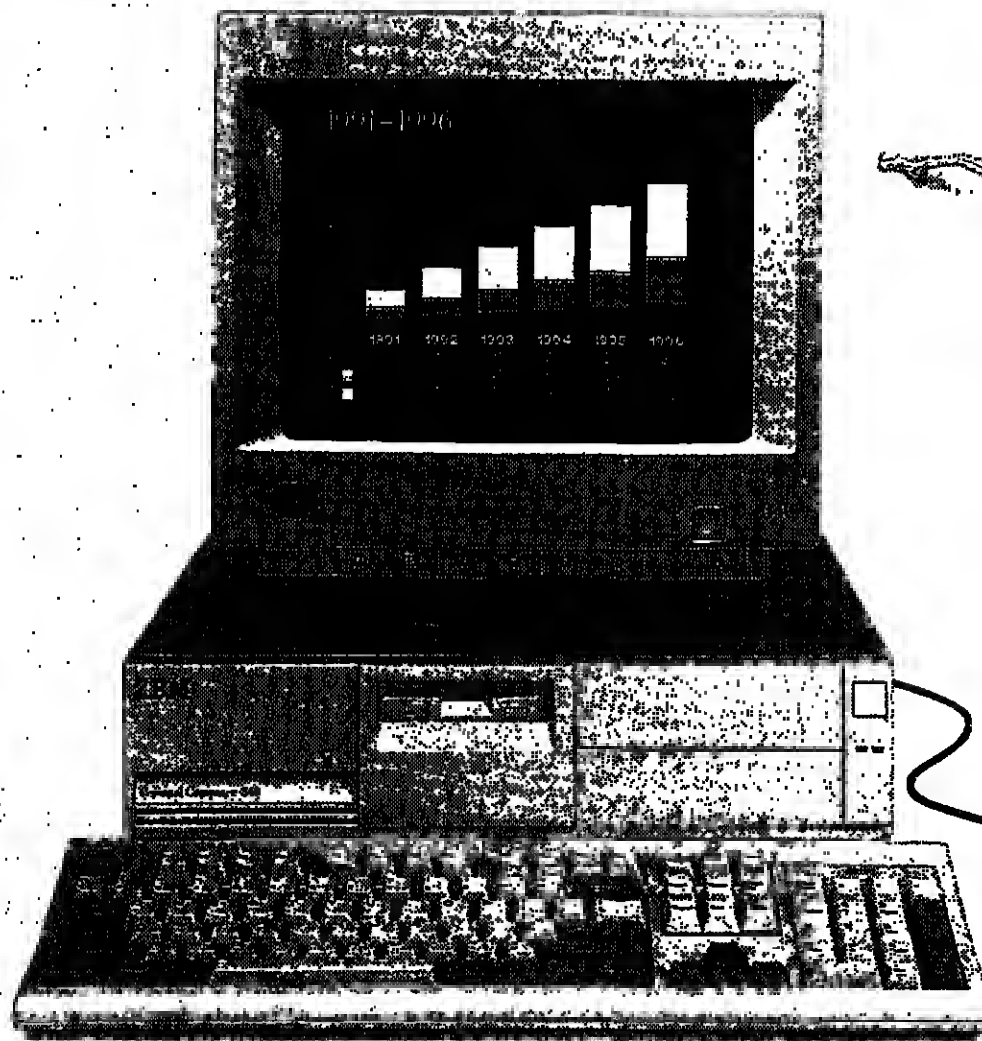
Most fatalities were caused by flooding, house collapses or electrocution. Mr Naidu put a provisional estimate on losses in East Godavari, hit hardest by the cyclone, at 20bn rupees (£370m). Weather officials said the cyclone had fizzled out.

Reddy Subramaniam, a tax collector in Rajahmundry, said 2,500 livestock had been lost, and 625,000 acres of rice paddy inundated. H S Brahma, the official coordinating relief in Hyderabad, said 100,000 people were sheltering in 400 relief camps set up in East and West Godavari districts.

Andhra Pradesh's flat coastline makes it vulnerable to storms tearing in off the Bay of Bengal. In 1977, 10,000 people were killed by a cyclone that drove a tidal wave up to eight miles inland. A cyclone killed 120 people in June this year and 967 people died in 1990.

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international

Europhobes conjure up a demon Paddy

EU commissioner Padraig Flynn is the new bogey man of the right-wing press

Latherine Butler
Brussels

The xenophobes in Britain's right-wing newspapers have been pinning for a proper hate figure in Brussels since the departure of Jacques Delors, who in his heyday could command the entire front page of *The Sun*. They may have found what they were looking for.

Padraig Flynn, the flamboyant figure harged with framing the EU's social policy, seems to be the man of the hour. For start, he is an outspoken critic of Britain's opt-out from the Maastricht Treaty's social provisions. He is also one of the authors of the law setting a maximum 48-hour working week, one of the Government's pet issues, and on which the European Court of Justice will rule next Tuesday. And for the simple-minded xenophobes, the best bit is: he's Irish.

Last month Mr Flynn was dubbed "the Brussels bigmouth" by *The Daily Mail* after calling for an end to the Irish opt-out. *The Telegraph* joked fun at his Irish accent and turns of phrase when he launched an initiative to stamp out sexual harassment in the workplace.

Yesterday Mr Flynn decided to take *The Daily Mail* to court following a vitriolic personal attack last week which branded him incompetent, bigoted and tainted by corruption. It was an extraordinary tirade of racist abuse, which contained offensive, predictable anti-Irish references to pigs, potatoes, priests and the IRA. *The Daily Mail* denounced Mr Flynn for his work in Brussels under the headline "This man comes from a world of farm subsidies and corruption. Now he wants to destroy Britain's economic success".

The Daily Mail's writer asked how Mr Flynn could understand the economics of a free market. He comes from Castlebar in the west of Ireland which we are told is an enclosed world of cattle markets, farm subsidies and generally tolerated

rural corruption". The people of Castlebar would no more apply the social chapter locally than obey an extradition warrant for the handover of an IRA prisoner to the British the diatribe continues.

Mr Flynn's career as a senior government minister in Ireland is cited to highlight his alleged incompetence. "Nothing in his own political background has prepared him for the responsibilities he now occupies."

The only specific charges levelled at him by *Daily Mail* columnist Bruce Anderson, Flynn rejects. One is an allegation that he "suppressed" an internal report because it suggested that high rates of worker protection might be to blame in countries which are unsuccessful at creating jobs. Mr Flynn denies he suppressed anything. The report will be published next week, although its conclusions will be toned down.

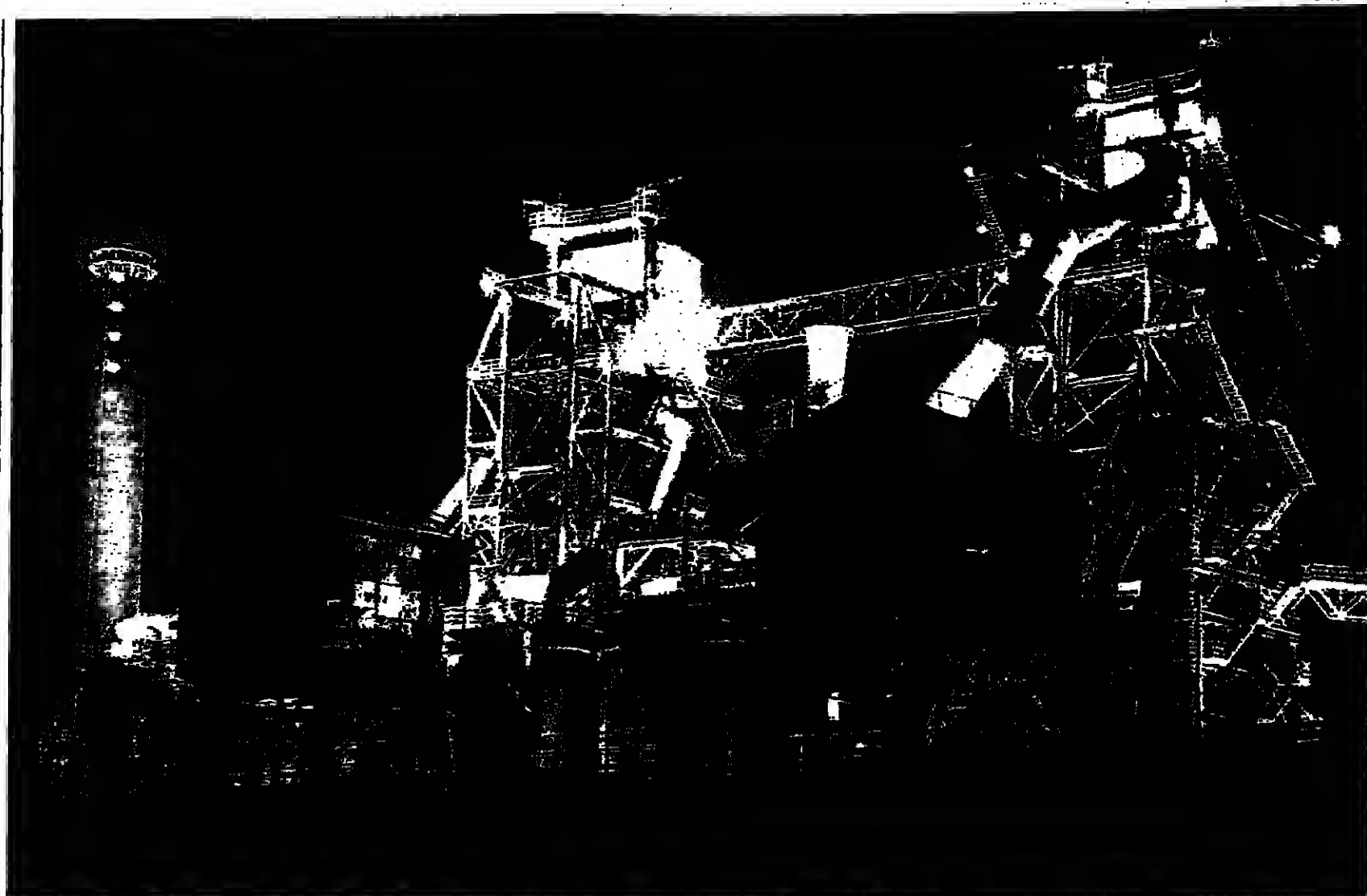
Mr Flynn's aides admit there is an ongoing debate in the Commission over the effects of regulation in the workplace. But to suggest there has been a cover-up of evidence is "laughable". The other charge - that he is trying to bring in a minimum wage - is dismissed as ill-informed nonsense. "The Commission has no powers to set wages," a spokesman said.

If he was distressed by the personal and bigoted nature of the attack, Mr Flynn should be bracing himself for more. John Major is contemplating defeat in next week's ruling on the 48-hour maximum working week. If he loses, he has pledged an all-out campaign against social policy in the Inter-Governmental Conference on EU reform. There is a campaign to demonise Mr Flynn and paint him as a regulator intent on dismantling British competitiveness ahead of the verdict.

Irish officials in Brussels seem resigned to the racist backlash which seems part of the latest wave of anti-Europe hysteria from London. "They can't seem to cope with the idea of policy for Britain being handled by some Paddy," said one official.



Attack: Padraig Flynn in papers' sights



Light fantastic: A foundry in Duisburg-Meiderich, Germany, after being turned into a work by the British artist, Jonathan Park. Photograph: Karl-Heinz Kreifelts/AP

Major warning on 48-hour week

Mary Dejevsky
Bordeaux

If the European Court rules that Britain must conform with laws imposing a maximum 48-hour working week, it will work for a change in the Maastricht Treaty, John Major said yesterday in Bordeaux at the end of the 19th Franco-British summit, four days before the court gives its verdict.

He said it was wrong that the measure had been brought under health-and-safety provisions of the treaty, a case Britain has argued (without success) for several years. If Britain lost, he said, "the same treaty could be used to drive through other things that come under the Social Chapter", so rendering Britain's opt-out from the provisions of the Maastricht Treaty meaningless.

Implying that Britain might consider holding the Intergovernmental Conference on European reform to ransom to get its way, Mr Major said Britain would "bring up the question" of changing the treaty in the ICG and would "expect our colleagues to respond".

President Jacques Chirac, asked for his views on Britain's predicament, appeared to sympathise with the difficulties it encountered with the European Court (and stressed the closeness of British and French views on the need to reform it) but he also made clear France's different approach to social and labour provision. He denied that adopting Britain's more flexible labour practices could help France reduce high unemployment. But France could well learn from Britain's more "rigorous management" of its economy.

Mr Major also cast doubt on the recent forecast from Brussels that as many as 12 countries could qualify to join a single European currency in 1999, and stressed again his concern that the Maastricht convergence criteria should not be diluted.

He said he would be "very surprised if there were anything like 12 countries qualified" on the "strict interpretation" of the criteria.

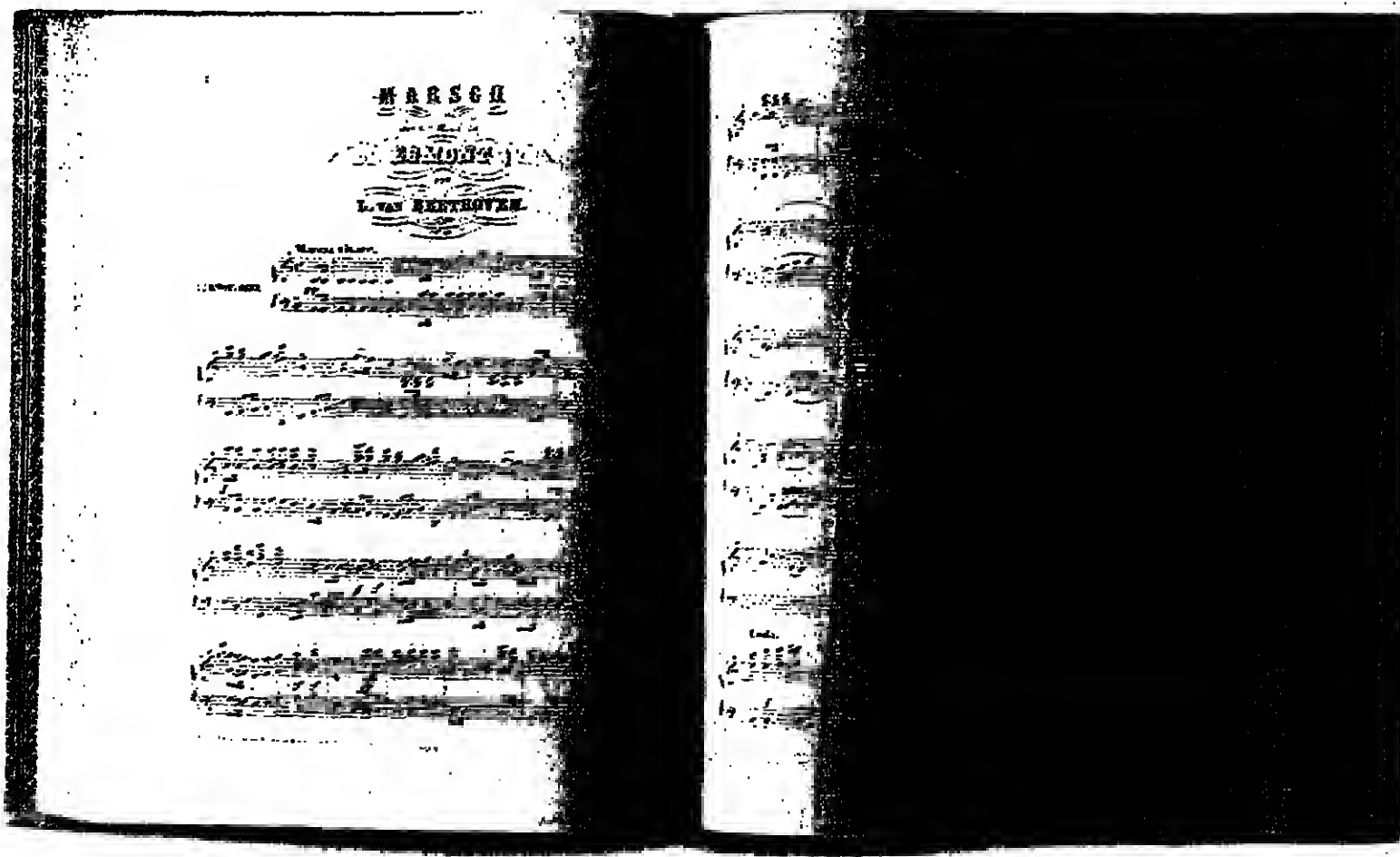
Mr Major was attending what will probably be his last French-British summit, assuming he loses the election. The proceedings in Bordeaux had a mostly relaxed and distinctly elegiac quality. Aside from an agreement on co-operation between the two countries' navies, there was precious little advance on bilateral or European issues.

Asked by a French reporter whether he

considered himself a "real European", Mr Major insisted that he did, but that this included wanting to change policies that could damage Europe "in the short or long term". He went on: "Whether I'll prevail or not with my fellow Europeans, or with my colleagues in the party, I have my doubts."

Proceedings were punctuated by the announcement that Mr Chirac and Chancellor Kohl of Germany would hold an "unofficial" meeting on 30 November at Périgueux, south-western France. The pretext is a gastronomic-book fair, at which Mr Kohl and his wife, Hannelore, will promote the tome they have written. But the timing suggests further co-ordination of the Franco-German position before the European summit in Dublin. A regular Franco-German summit is due to be held in Germany in December.

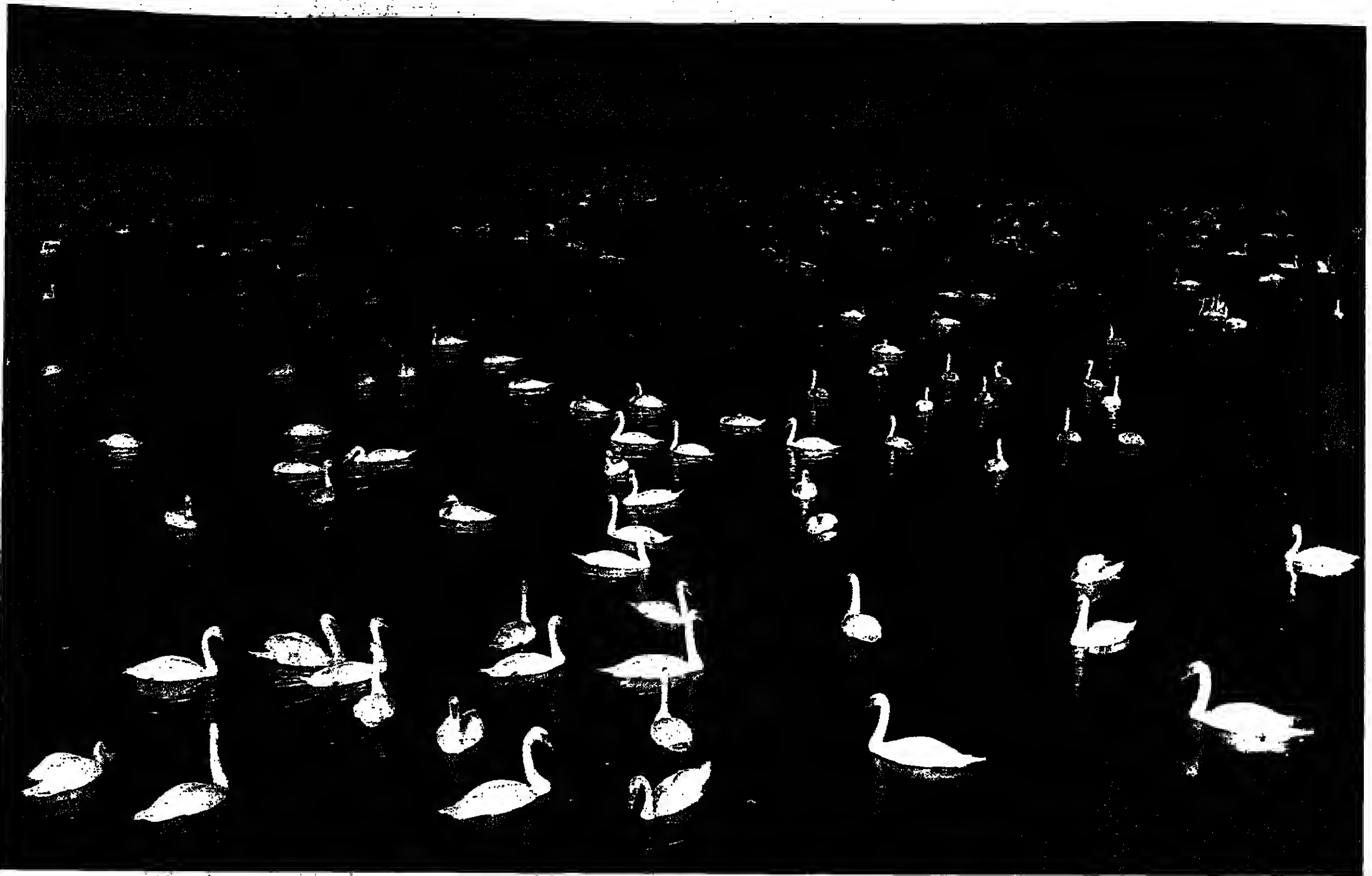
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the long weekend

THE INDEPENDENT • SATURDAY 9 NOVEMBER 1996

So Tony Blair has a hair problem and does not appeal to women. Bill Clinton, with his good hair, clearly does. Is life so simple and so cruel? Think on this as you turn these pages. We comb through the charms of Venice – *la Serenissima*. Will we ever be so beguiled by Croydon? Even with new bouffant, will it ever be *la Croydonissima*? More worryingly, we learn that our garden says much about our class – your plants may never hide your roots

Interview



John Walsh meets P J Proby
Rock star, trouser splitter, walking disaster, survivor and legendary braggart **page 3**

Kerber's week 2
Heavenly + Earthly 2
Weather 2

arts & books



Dancing on the volcano
Even 15 years of bitter civil war couldn't keep Lebanon's Caracalla Dance Theatre out of action **page 4**

Live reviews 5
TV & radio reviews 5
Books 6-8

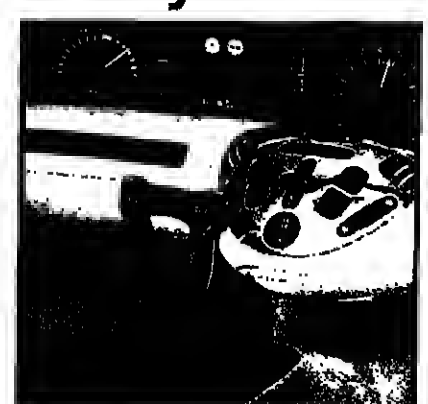
travel



In search of secret Venice
Away from the Grand Canal, shabby churches house joyous paintings and saintly relics **page 9**

Skiing 12-13
Gardening 16
Country walk 17

money



Say goodbye to your steering wheel
Mercedes revamps an old idea and invents a car you drive with a joystick **page 25**

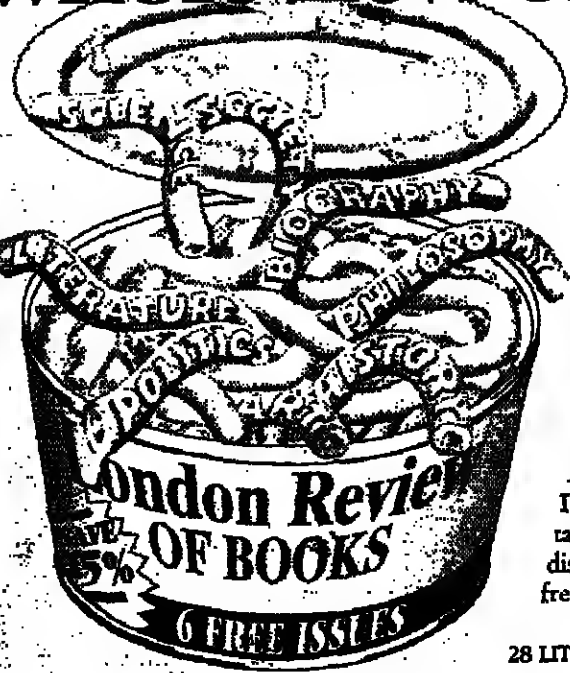
Property 18-19
Shopping 26-28
Crossword 29

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Whatever happened to the New Zealand flatworm?

The moment: The invaders were first noticed on our shores in early 1995: foreigners hell-bent on destruction. They would emerge at night, punch a hole in their prey and suck them dry, before returning to their hiding place. But this was no vampirish European Commissioner – a worse alien had arrived: *Arctostaphylos triangulata*, or the New Zealand flatworm.

Like shrivelled versions of creatures from *Dune*, they are pinker and slimmer than their British cousins, and are surrounded by a cocoon of sticky mucus. They stretch out as long as 8in when squirming along. They are a formidable predator, devouring as many as 14 British earthworms in a week, but capable of going for a year without food by slowly absorbing their own tissue.

The background: They arrived piggyback on a seed from the Antipodes, were first discovered some 30 years ago in Belfast gardens, and were identified in London's Natural History Museum as a native of New Zealand's South Island heath forests. This small, ribbon-like creature almost certainly travelled half-way around the globe as a stowaway in the soil of pot plants.

The effect: National panic. There were sightings from Carlisle to Christchurch and there was only one topic of conversation: how could the British, brandishing pitch fork and sharpened spade, rid themselves of the Antipodean interloper? There were warlike rallying cries to protect the fine, upstanding British worm – the cornerstone of this country's ecological system and vital to the survival of plants and soil life – from the Kiwi cannibals who were blamed for waterlogged soil, dying trees and the national debt. Questions were asked in the highest chambers of the land: in the House of Lords, Lord Carter said the flatworms "go round in gangs and jump on earthworms". Earl Howe, a junior agricultural minister, reported that the official advice from the Central Science Laboratory to anyone encountering a New Zealand flatworm was: "to tread on it or pour something hot or salty on top of it".

Moments of subsequence: Government instructions to stamp on the flatworm were unsuccessful – as Lord Aberdeen asked, "Are you sure it's effective to stamp on a worm that's already flat?"

Though they may have squirmed out of the public limelight, they have certainly not disappeared from gardens.

A few months after the initial media obsession with the killer worms, a second species has appeared in southern Britain – a smaller, less harmful variant. This was followed more recently by the discovery in Scotland of two more varieties of flatworm not before seen in this country.

The flatworm seems to have almost no predators, but preliminary research in Edinburgh now suggests that a so-far-unidentified beetle may eat the invader. "What we really need is funding for a post-graduate to do a thesis," says Dr Cosens. "That would revolutionise our understanding."

heavenly chaos, where astrologers thrive

Armistice Day next week finds several countries still mired in devastating civil wars.

There is something particularly horrifying about a nation turned violently upon itself.

As with Afghans, Kurds and Rwandans, the dislocation felt in mid-17th century England had as much to do with the world being turned upside down as it did with the fact of fighting on home soil. As the touchstones of daily life disintegrated, with neighbours and even families finding themselves on opposing sides, people turned to irregular sources for guidance. Yet even the astrologers were at sword's point.

The heavenly sphere was thought to serve as a giant billboard on which the Creator signalled

intentions to his creatures – if they knew how to decode the messages. This is where the astrologers came in. Phenomena such as comets and eclipses provided some assurance that God was still in his heaven, even if all was wrong with the world.

During the English Civil War the best selling political propaganda was written by astrologers, who conducted a pamphlet war in parallel with the military camps of roundhead and cavalier. Surprisingly, the most gifted astrologers sided with Cromwell. This could be put down to far-sighted prophetic ability on their part, but the truth is, they were staunch Puritan and republican supporters. Only one loyal astrologer, George Wharton, accompanied the King to



Anne Geneva

Oxford, issuing royalist pamphlets from a portable press as they marched.

There is no evidence that either Cromwell or the King believed in astrology, but both recognised its propaganda value. It was said at the time that Parliament's chief astrological propagandist, William Lilly, was worth several regiments. When Wharton

published a pamphlet based on a map of the heavens for the time the royalists began their march from Oxford, Lilly quickly used the same starry paradigm for a feat of astrological virtuosity. Recounting the time-honoured emblem of the sun to symbolise the King, and insisting that all heavenly portents augured his defeat, Lilly's pamphlet appeared on the very day the decisive Battle of Naseby was fought. Thus are spin doctors born.

Later in the Civil War, the 1648 siege of Colchester provided a dramatic astrological scenario. Inside the besieged royalist garrison, the astrologer John Humphrey was frantically assuring the town's governor that relief troops

would soon save the day. To counter this and boost the attacking soldiers' morale, Lilly and another astrologer sympathetic to the Parliament were sent for. They assured the general and troops that the town would soon be surrendered. "as indeed it was," noted Lilly.

All wars generate prophets, whether poets, foreign office experts, spies, historians, arms dealers or soothsayers. Amid the chaos we grasp at anything that promises to bring order.

The current exhibition of Rubens' landscapes at the National Gallery shows his ecstatic response to the peaceful, sunny countryside of Flanders, liberated after many years of war. Would that such a regal sun bled the world on the next Armistice Day.

in addition

The New Fowler's Modern English Usage, which has been published this week by OUP, isn't really Fowler's at all, but Robert Burchfield's. For the first time since Fowler's classic appeared in 1926, OUP have commissioned a complete re-write and who better to do it than Robert Burchfield, whose earlier *Supplement to the OED* and *Dictionary of English Etymology* have established him as a worthy guardian of the mother tongue, even if he is a New Zealander.

This new book, however, closely follows several other new guides to good English. We have therefore decided to test drive the new Fowler (FMEU) alongside Chambers *Guide to Grammar and Usage* (CGGU), Longman's *Guide to English Usage* (LGEU) and Martin Cutts' *The Plain English Guide* (TPEG), also from OUP.

The table below gives their rulings on six items of linguistic dispute.

	FMEU	LGEU	CGGU	TPEG
to boldly split	X	X	X	X
final preposition	X	X	X	X
protagonist	X	X	X	X
infer=imply	X	X	X	X
minuscule (sic)	X	X	X	X
ongoing situation	X	X	X	X

(✓ approve, X disapprove, = equivocal, - no opinion stated)

The *Plain English Guide* is the most liberal, as might be expected in a work designed to help readers write clearly, eschewing obfuscation, pleonasm and catchwords. But it almost encourages us to split infinitives and end sentences with prepositions, simply because it's not wrong to do so. In the new Fowler, Burchfield says: "Avoid splitting infinitives whenever possible, but do not suffer undue remorse if a split infinitive is unavoidable." He also discourages, without condemning, prepositions to end sentences with.

Burchfield/Fowler is understanding of "people who knew nothing of the nature of Greek drama" in his acceptance of the use of "protagonist" in mean "proponent", though he detects a "whiff of pleonasm" in the phrase "chief protagonist". The Longman Guide says that if you use the word to mean the main character in a Greek drama, you'll probably be misunderstood, so you should "have the courage" to use it to mean "supporter". Chambers, meanwhile, are happy for you to have the courage to mispell "minuscule" even though this could lead the language into a crisis situation.

Compared with the liberalism of other grammars, Burchfield's enlightened pedantry is a sheer joy to read and consult. Buy it.

William Hartston

earthly eavesdropper on the role models

The lavatory is quiet compared with the riot outside, where 300 of London's liggers are consuming free drink while ignoring a panicking Brand Manager as he tries to make himself heard over the PA system. My cubicle is a comfort zone, except that there's no space for those bins they put in ladies' loos. It's impossible to sit four-square on the seat.

The outer door opens, bellowing wafts in, then it swings to. Shh-clunk. A pair of platforms appears before my door; it rattles, then they retreat. Someone else shh-clunks in.

"Ohh," says a little voice. "Allo."

"Allo," replies another, equally high, equally slow on the syllable. "I haven't seen you since London Fashion Week."

Models. You don't even

need to see them to know it. It's all in the voice: reedy, low-energy, sparing with the pronunciation lest they move their faces and get wrinkles. In the world of the mannequin you don't say "model" (too much lip movement. No, you say "mudd-aww", the first syllable high-pitched, the second dying away. As in "Um ur muddaw. What do you do?"

The platforms return to the front of my door, accompanied by a pair of white patent clogs. "How are you? Much work?"

"Yes, I've been really busy. I did a shoot for a teen magazine last week."

"Oh. They don't pay very well, do they?"

"Not really. But it's good exposure. Patsy Kensit started in teen magazines. You?"

"I've had a catalogue, and I did a stand in



Serena Mackesy

Birmingham. A computer company."

"Which one?"

"I don't remember."

A crackle of nylon, and the loo next to me flushes.

A third set of clunks walks into the main pool.

Squeaks of recognition. "Allo!" "Oh, hi. How are you?" "This is Kim. She's with my agency."

Model Two identifies herself as something like Marika or Tamika or

Tamara. I can't lurk inside any more: it will become obvious. When I emerge, only two of them are left, staring into the mirror.

One has short hair dyed baby-white, the other seaweed-straight, dark brown stuff down to her shoulders. They are repainting unblemished brick-brown lips. Both are wearing shift dresses with bootlace straps. Their shoulders protrude as if they've been trussed for Christmas. You could fit two of them into one of me. I, of course, am glamorous in a black jersey dress that hasn't been the same since I forgot to change out of it for one of those 2am paint-stripping jobs.

Model One is talking as she makes up, top lip absolutely still, the bottom one doing the enunciation. "— far too fat," she is

saying. "She must weigh almost nine stone."

"Beaugh," says Tamika-Tamara. "Gross."

"I know. She must eat like a pig."

Tamika-Tamara licks her fingers, runs it upwards over her eyebrows to produce that Kate Moss look of blank stardom.

"The agency are really worried. Kelly was saying they're thinking about dropping her."

I realise that I haven't exhaled for a full minute, so great is the effort of sucking in my cheekbones. They clomp towards the party. "She's going to be in real trouble," says Model One. "Well," says Tamika-Tamara. "She'll only have herself to blame."

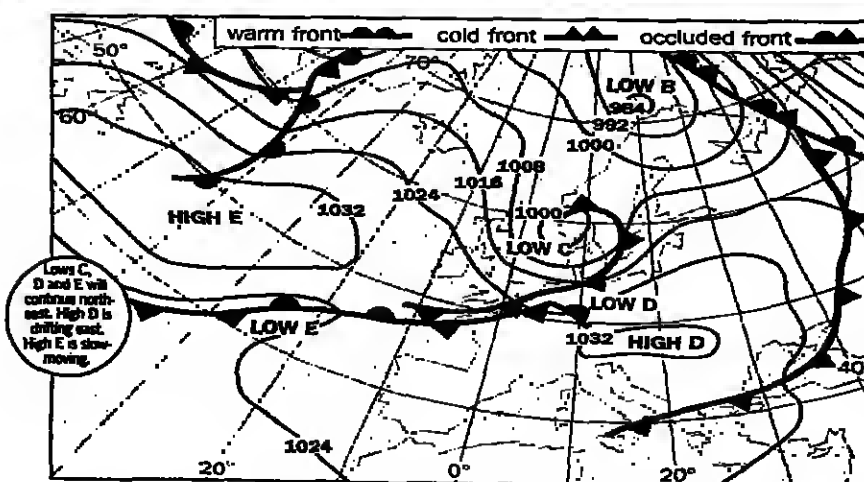
A gust of alcohol-fuelled yelling, and the door bangs to. With blissful relief, I release my strangled breath.

Kerber's Week



weather

Europe and The World



WORLD WEATHER YESTERDAY MIDNIGHT (GMT) cloudy, light fog, rain, snow, sunny, thunder previous day's figure of local time.

Amsterdam s 10 50	Cape Town r 16 61	Istanbul s 17 63	Moscow r 8 46
Albany s 21 70	Casablanca s 12 70	Jerusalem s 19 66	Munich c 9 48
Auckland s 11 61	Christchurch s 13 55	Johannesburg c 21 70	New York c 30 68
Bangkok c 31 88	Copenhagen f 7 45	Kuala Lumpur f 33 91	Nice s 19 66
Barcelona c 16 61	Carri s 19 66	Liston s 18 64	Nicosia s 23 73
Beirut s 22 72	Darwin s 31 88	Madrid s 18 64	Paris f 13 55
Belgrade c 13 55	Florence c 17 63	Majorca s 21 70	Prague s 8 46
Berlin c 10 50	Frankfurt s 9 48	Malta s 21 70	Raykjavik f 4 25
Bombay s 33 91	Geneva s 19 66	Walla s 21 70	Rio de Jan s 27 81
Brussels s 9 48	Gibraltar s 19 66	Melbourne s 25 77	Riyadh c 18 64
Budapest c 13 55	Helsinki f 4 39	Mexico City s 22 72	Rome c 18 64
Cairo s 25 77	Hong Kong s 29 84	Miami f 29 84	Singapore f 33 91

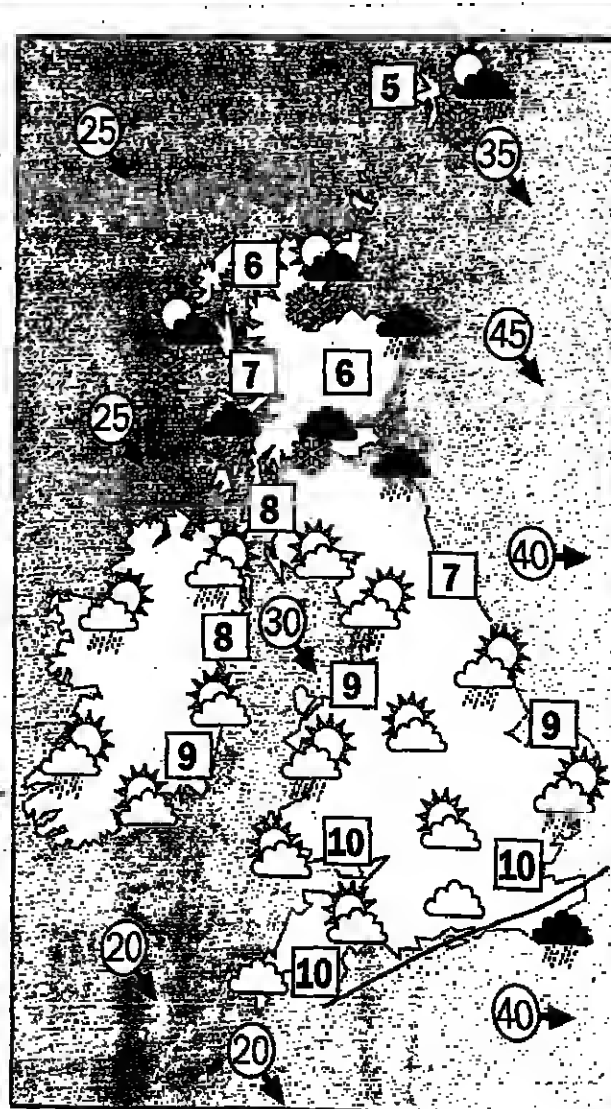
General Situation and 5-Day Outlook

A depression just northeast of Scotland will move away to the east. A major depression will develop to the west of the country by Monday.

Today, the whole of Scotland will get a mix of sunshine and showers with a strong northwest wind. Many of the showers are going to be wintry as well, with the worst of them to the north. Northern Ireland will get some sunshine, but also showers and a gusty northwest wind. England and Wales is going to get a mix of sunshine and showers with a cool northwest wind. However, southern England will get off to a cloudy start with some showery rain.

Sunday promises some sunshine, but with showery rain spreading into the far south and the far northwest later. Monday will then see windy weather everywhere with showers or spells of rain. And little change is expected for Tuesday with plenty of showers while many places get some longer spells of rain. Also, as strong northerly winds become established, it is going to turn colder. And the cold windy weather will then persist into the second half of the week with plenty of hail, sleet and snow showers.

The British Isles



THEATRE A Perfect Ganesh, West Yorkshire Playhouse

Jude Kelly's production helps the audience to stomach Terrence McNally's sugar-sweet play of two women searching for their souls. By Jeffrey Wainwright



Allow, accept, be: Eleanor Bron (Katharine) and Prunella Scales (Margaret) play with wit and tact

Photograph: Jason Slee / Guzelian

It is easy to fancy Katharine and Margaret taking the train from Connecticut, lunching at Jackie Mason's and taking in a Broadway matinee that reminds them of the books they read in college – a play such as this one, in which they appear, Terrence McNally's *A Perfect Ganesh*. They would not, however, be flattered. The satire they could take, but the play soft-soaps and comforts its audience to the point of insult.

We meet Katharine (Eleanor Bron) and Margaret (Prunella Scales) as they check in for their Indian vacation. McNally's undoubted craft characterises the two within seconds: Margaret pursed and suspicious, aiming to see India "from a comfortable seat somewhat at a distance"; Katharine disorganised and gushing with wonder – "O for a muse of fire!"

McNally seeks what Margaret would call "resonance" by making a Chorus out of the Hindu god Ganesh, a god of appetite and trickery with an elephant's head and a huge stomach, played with great

resource by Paul Bhattacharjee. Ganesh explains to us that he is everywhere, "in your cancer", "in the ant on the way to your potato salad", and in nicer places, too. He is happy, cheerful, the god of acceptance.

Ganesh is evidently meant to represent and honour India and so swivel the play out of a western perspective. That he is ubiquitous is, of course, mightily convenient, for McNally can have the benefit of his novelty and make him sound like a cabaret MC. An ingenious device, Ganesh nevertheless serves to validate an action in which India is really only projected in terms of Margaret and Katharine's – read "our" – problems.

Both have come to India for their souls. At first the play raises a sceptical eyebrow at this, but as it follows the familiar pattern of unveiling the heartache beneath the Burberys – both have lost sons, both harbour guilts and repressions, both have a future portion of pain awaiting – the quest is accomplished. The climax comes as Margaret confronts the leper

whose reaching hand she thinks says "love me", and tries to fulfil a childhood dream in which she would kiss a leper's face. She has to realise she cannot, and gives him 50 rupees instead. Ganesh, whose mantra is "allow, accept, be", tells us, "she worried about her soul; he had the best meal of his life". Such "realism" is, of course, just what we want to hear, and to be reassured that we have our miseries, too. Thus are Margaret and Katharine healed and can love. "Come on!" as they say in the logo.

Remarkably, however, Jude Kelly's production manages to slip this sugar down without nur noticing too much. Prunella Scales and Eleanor Bron play with wit, tact and enough understatement to keep our toes straight. The design by Robin Dond, with excellent lighting by Jon Linstrum and sound by Mic Pool, is wonderfully atmospheric with a beautiful economy of means. Nevertheless, like Katharine's "perfect Ganesh" collectable, this is soapstone not amethyst. To 7 Dec. Booking: 0113-244 2111

Postcards from Oz



Jasper Rees on Television

American Visions (BBC2, Sun), an attempt to explain "What we can tell about Americans from the things they have made", is made by an Australian. One of the things you can tell about Australians from what they have made is that they hate Australia. The finest Australian minds have no rivals when it comes to making their excuses and emigrating.

Our view of Australians has been coloured by their hustling media presence. Basically, in their high-falutin intellectual way, they have confirmed what we always knew about Australians: they're loud (Germaine Greer), they're abrasive (Robert Hughes), and they don't take anything seriously (Clive James). See your way past all the books they've read, and written, and you can tell they grew up in earshot of the same reference points as the grotesques of Sylvia Waters. This reductive view of Australian culture goes right to the top. In *Neighbours* – Tenth Anniversary Special (BBC1, Mon), a BBC executive explained that they bought the soap because films like *Picnic at Hanging Rock* "had established an interest in Australian programming".

It's almost surreal that of all the eminent Australians only Richie Benaud, clipped, diplomatic, unsmiling, contravenes the stereotype. Hughes has been talking stance lessons from Benaud.

In his magnificent tour of American creativity, the critic swivels his eyes towards camera with his head turned in quarter profile, as the cricketer does when giving his unimpeachable verdict on the day's play. The pose is carefully chosen for the delivery of opinions which would sound too arrogant if fired off face on. It helps Hughes that he is physically in the bruiserweight division. If the stock intellectual figure remains someone you could knock over with a feather, this one could punch your lights out. Instead, he knocks you out with criticism that smacks of pectorals and hips, preened in a smooth, faultlessness like something off Bondi Beach.

For his first American vision, Hughes observed the Republic's attempt to create its architecture on the Athenian model. His presence was sorely missed down in Canberra, where Billy Connolly was stumbling in his own wee way to an understanding of the Australian capital. He spluttered the name of Albert Speer, as tourists do when confronted by triumphalist urban design. Parked statuesquely in front of a bust of Lincoln, Hughes invoked the same name. He explained how Speer hankered in harness television's potential for propaganda. If technology had allowed, Speer could have thrust the image of Hitler into every German home hut, like Lincoln's spin doctors, had to make do with lionising him in marble.

Billy Connolly's World Tour of Australia (BBC1, Mon) is a perfect illustration of that potential for image projection. Television, the laboratory of modern celebrity, will nowadays only allow its own creations to front peak-time programmes. No matter that Connolly knows no more about Australian history than anyone who has read the *Rough Guide*, he got the job.

His series documents Australia in unenlightening exclamations. It was "brilliant!" on top of Sydney harbour bridge, "fantastic!" at the summit of the Opera House, "crap!" in Canberra. And it was "shit!" with a comedian as guide.

Clive James's Postcard from the Melbourne Cup (ITV, Mon) was superficially more satisfying, because James comes home before he writes his jokes. But the two students of Australia are cut from much the same cloth. They both hit the road on a motorbike, buying into the cliché of free-spiritualness so central to the Australian myth. Like Connolly in Canberra, James was a foreigner in Melbourne reeling from the tedium of the place. "The pace of life is a casual walk," he said over a shot of him casually walking. "The dream of peace is still alive here." This is Jamesian for "when's the next plane home?"

Maybe it was just Melbourne that drew his sting, but his relish for being nice to people on camera only to shaft them on the video-over is on the wane. He even got a part in *Neighbours*, a programme which as a critic he'd have flayed alive. (Connolly did better: on-stage in Sydney, he said he was surprised at Kylie Minogue's size; then, imagining they were joined at the groin, he span her tiny frame round like a Catherine wheel.)

With James transformed into a kook, you found deeper signs of subversion on *Neighbours*' own birthday celebration. Compiling all the deaths and marriages from the show's first decade, the editing had a subtle dig at the rhythm method of storyboarding in soaps. The actress who played Daphne explained how she died, "but that was great too because it brought her character full circle". You may recognise the steal from *King Lear*. "The sheila's come full circle."

CLASSICAL MUSIC

King Olaf: BBC Philharmonic / Donald Hunt, Victoria Hall, Hanley

The year 1896 is a prime contender for the title of Elgar's *annus mirabilis* – the year in which his oratorio *The Light of Life* (*Lux Christi*) and the dramatic cantata *Scenes from the Saga of King Olaf* both saw the light of day within a few months of each other.

Donald Hunt's recent performance at the Worcester Three Choirs Festival of the former (with the RLPO), his swansong as festival director, was memorably convincing; and it was Hunt who was again at the helm (this time of the BBC Philharmonic) for the centenary revival of *King Olaf*, given at the Victoria Hall, Hanley, last Saturday, almost exactly 100 years to the day after the 39-year-old Elgar unleashed it at the North Staffordshire Triennial Music Festival.

Besides suiting a penchant (*à la* Grieg or Wagner) for Germanic-Nordic myth, *King Olaf*'s triumph of

Christianity over pagan darkness gave Elgar an apt metaphor, perhaps, for the kind of breakthrough he was striving after in his own artistic life. It's a courageous and, for its day, mould-breaking work, in whose leitmotivic invention, solo and (substantial) choral writing *The Dream of Gerontius* is clearly foreshadowed. And it opened doors. Performances became rife and within a year Jaeger at Novello's was Elgar's publisher.

Adapted from Longfellow, *King Olaf* is by no means problem-free. Planned orchestral links got infuriatingly axed at publishers' insistence. One focal encounter sustains the first half – a David-and-Goliath riddle between the pagan Ironheart (one rather warns to him) and the opportunistic monotheistic upstart Olaf. Then things rather peter out in a loose odyssey of lightly connected Circian scenes, centring on soprano solo.

Paradoxically, it was this rather nebulous, lyrical second part that gained an unexpected cogency here, due partly to Hunt's easing of the tempo, and especially to the soprano Susan Chilcott, resplendent on high notes, who brought to this lightly characterised melody for anti-heroine just the assurance and the shaping of Elgar's stately, extended lines that we so hankered after elsewhere.

Earlier, the tenor Arthur Davies (for whom the role of Olaf might have been tailor-made) seemed oddly tired, tense and undramatic: only "Behold me, my people" took wing; otherwise Olaf remained unprojected and ill at ease (but then, even Edward Lloyd at the 1896 premiere famously missed an entry). Alan Opie, chilling over raspy cellos at the start and an appealing narrator later on, was periodically overwhelmed by an orchestral tidal wave. Elsewhere, from the opening's

dark, *Apostles*-like mutterings of bass clarinet, the BBC Phil, not least in the lush middle-strings close harmony that opens Part 2, responded sympathetically to this unfamiliar score.

Besides Wedgwood and Stanley Matthews, the five towns' pride and joy is the splendidly named (and attired) Ceramic City Choir. If some of the gutsier choruses just lacked the demonism they deserved, the eerier ballads' contrapuntal vigour (for all the non-reverberant acoustic) came across well; some interspersed gems of Elgarian part-song were impeccably phrased; and the sheer inspiration that led him to mesh a *Parafal*-tinged apotheosis with the melting song "As Torrents in Summer" could scarcely have been better highlighted. Had *Gerontius* never emerged, we would treasure *King Olaf*. We should relish it all the same.

Roderic Dunnott

Virginity? No stigma



Robert Hanks on Radio

A theology student once told me that the Paraclete – an alternative title for the Holy Ghost – can be defined as the presence of Christ's absence, a piece of information with which I have since wowed innumerable dinner-parties.

Anyway, John Shuttleworth, Sheffield's king of the Yamaha organ, now stands in a similar relation to Eamon, Older Brother of Jesus. Following an article by Paul Donovan in last week's *Sunday Times*, complaining in advance of the profanity of Michael Redmond's comedy – which works on the premise that the Holy Family were Irish immigrants to Palestine – James Boyle, Radio 4's new controller, decided to pull the series and put on repeats of *The Shuttleworths* instead.

Among other things, Donovan cited jokes about Jesus's halo – the actual line was that it kept Eamon awake at night – and an exchange in which a Roman centurion "sneered" at the Virgin Mary "Who's that? I wouldn't give her one," to which Eamon replies, "Nobody ever has, in fact."

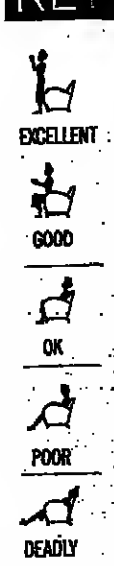
What's interesting about both these jokes is that they rely on the assumption of Christ's divinity and Mary's virginity – hence the mystery, never explained, that Eamon is Jesus's older brother (that point clearly went over the head of one newspaper this week, which referred to the programme as *Eamon, Younger Brother of Christ*). And it's hard to see where the problem is in having a Roman

soldier expressing sexual distaste for Mary, whose attractiveness to men is not, one would have thought, an article of anybody's faith. The joke here is about the way men talk about women, and the peculiar doublethink that allows many of them to pray to a Virgin while treating other women with contempt. In any case, if we're not going to have Roman soldiers displaying irreverence towards the Holy Family, does that mean we are going to condemn programmes that show men doing stuff like, oh, I don't know, beating up Jesus and putting a crown of thorns on his head?

The basic point should be clear: to use religion as material for a joke is not the same as failing to take it seriously – and that's true even when the jokes involve sex and swearing (*Eamon* was, after all, being broadcast way after any conceivable watershed in the *Late Night Opening* slot). Still, Paul Donovan's feelings aren't the real issue. The issue is James Boyle's reaction, which looks like either pathetic timidity and over-sensitivity to newspapers, or ill-judged authoritarianism. Either way, it doesn't sound like the Radio 4 we know and love.

GERAINT LEWIS			
	THE PLAY	THE FILM	THE TELEVISION SERIES
	Death of a Salesman	Michael Collins	American Visions
overview	Arthur Miller's classic allegory of the American dream, about the aspirations of a man (Alon Armstrong) who is running out of steam. The seventh Miller play from director David Thacker.	Alan Rickman and Julia Roberts (natch) join Liam Neeson (the eponymous hero) in Neil Jordan's epic biopic about the Irish accountant turned IRA revolutionary who ultimately eschewed violence.	Robert Hughes follows his outstanding 1982 series <i>The Shock of the New</i> with an eight-part account of American life, history and culture through the images of its art and architecture.
critical view	Paul Taylor was profoundly unmoved by a "ponderous, muddled" production. "Lacks drive and momentum," agreed the <i>Standard</i> . "Highly imaginative design... A well-staged revival," said the <i>Guardian</i> . "One of Thacker's crispest, most lucid productions," sang the <i>Times</i> . "Armstrong is outstanding," praised the <i>Sunday Telegraph</i> . "Slightly plodding sincerity," worried the <i>Independent</i> on <i>Sunday</i> . "Doesn't seem a bit dated," said the <i>Mail</i> .	Adam Mars-Jones found Jordan "strangely out of touch with the hero he seeks to honour". "A potentially mesmerising subject reduced to bland slab of hero worship," scoffed the <i>FT</i> . "Many more pluses than minuses," approved the <i>Guardian</i> . "A magnificently crafted, flawed but honourable attempt at the most difficult and important of stories," hailed the <i>Telegraph</i> . "The thinking man's <i>Die Hard</i> ," scorned the <i>Spectator</i> .	Jasper Rees applauded "his magnificent tour of American creativity". "By no means yet clear whether Hughes has bitten off more than he can chew," equivocated the <i>Mail</i> . "Muscular and powerful... throbbing with love for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness through the arts. The perfect guide," salivated the <i>Telegraph</i> . "Hughes's bold new series looked like a lost sheep that had wandered out of the Open University corral," bleated the <i>Guardian</i> .
on view	In repertoire, at the Lyttelton, Royal National Theatre, London SE1 (0171-928 2252)	Cert 15, 132 mins. On general release.	Sundays, BBC2 7.20pm
our view	Sad rather than moving. Wait instead for Nicholas Hytner's film of Miller's <i>The Crucible</i> .	Fundamentally shaky with Rickman acting Neeson off the screen.	Authoritative, well-written and provocative. What more could you want?

KEY



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Hairybacks and white kaffirs

Christopher Hope cheers a lexicographical milestone

A Dictionary of South African English: on Historical Principles edited by Penny Silva, Oxford, £25

I have been called a "native" of South Africa. And I've been called a "white kaffir". I proudly confess to being both and I am happy to find them listed in the monumental new *Dictionary of South African English*. Even if the good book cautions against their use for the offence they may cause.

Never mind. This is a wonderful achievement, an occasion for trumpets and confetti. At long last, speakers of South African English have been given a work of reference commensurate with the rich, irreverent vigour of their language. It's been a long time coming. A quarter of a century in the making, some 3000 entries and a joy from first to last.

From now on, not only will others understand us a little more easily; but here is proof that South African English may be read, savoured and, even more surprisingly, understood. So if I write: "The kugel left the Greek and jumped the robot", the foreign reader need only consult the dictionary to see that I'm talking not Yiddish, science fiction or even sexual perversion. I'm reporting that "a young, spoilt, wealthy (Jewish) woman...preoccupied with frivolities" drove away from the corner shop and failed to stop at the traffic lights.

As to the question of giving offence, nothing the commendable editors of the dictionary may say, is likely to discourage South Africans from insulting one another when the occasion demands. Nor should it. Because your outrage may be my pleasure. It was always so. Only when the dictionary ventures into cautionary matters does it flounder.

Take the time honoured insults addressed to Afrikaners; the popular "hairyback"; or the more inventive "rock-spider". No good, says the dictionary. Yet equally popular gibes at the English - "rootnek" (redneck) or "soutprik" (saltprick) - rate only the dodgy health warning "often derogatory". Often? Mostly, surely, or why bother?

And sometimes the same word may have entirely opposite effects. Black rad-

icals often used "Boer", referring to police officers or soldiers or farmers, as an insult. But when used among Afrikaners about themselves, the editors insist, it is an "affectionate and humorous name". In fact - not here canvassed - the word is also favoured by the neo-fascist white, right wing Afrikaners for whom it has mystical overtones of purification and lost innocence.

Then there is the word no one talks about but a lot of people use: "Kaffir". A form, derived innocently enough (except that it was probably coined by slave traders) from the Arabic *kafir*, meaning unbeliever. The k-word receives by far the longest entry in the dictionary (eight pages) and is deemed "offensive in all senses and combinations".

And yes, often it is. But outside the cities, you travel in the *platteland* (rural or country districts) you will find it in the mouths of almost every farmer you meet, used with calculated venom or unabashed affection. I do not know which is worse.

But then, again, it is impossible to understand the often poisonous relations between black and white during the past three centuries without familiarising oneself with the term and its remarkable variants.

I think such words might be liberated far more effectively by taking them out of the mouths of those to whom the sole right to use them has now been ceded: the coalition of *bitterenders* (diehards), religious crazies and messianic Boers who constitute the grumbling opposition to democracy by giving them back to those they set out to insult.

Happily, when it comes to laying down the law as to what is and is not correct: the editors of the dictionary, have done, as Fowler did in the vexed matter of the hyphen, and chosen to wallow in the general confusion. They show themselves to be far more interested in recording and celebrating the varieties of South African English than deciding who should have their mouths washed out. Such mildness is admirable and wise. We have had enough of the language police in South

Africa. And they are still rising high. Recently, the new government, following the example of apartheid, decided to enforce laws against "hate speech". Like their predecessors, this will do little to stop the hate and much to curtail free expression.

There is always a great gaseous cloud of rhetoric floating about easy talk of freedom of speech, and essential liberties in the new South Africa. The country remains the capital of cant and the home of humbug. The number of official languages has risen from two (Afrikaans and English) to eleven. It is called "indigenisation", an ugly word for an empty notion. The idea is to emphasise languages unjustly neglected in the past. Zulu, say, which boasts more speakers than any other language. But the policy is likely to enhance the appeal of English, the one language unconnected to party or tribe.

Afrikaans is now under threat. Hardly surprising that the tongue of the masters does not appeal to their former servants. It is scant consolation, perhaps, but a cross-section of the *taal*, ranging from racial epithets like *kaffirboetie* (little brother of black people) to amatory jokes: *opsitters* (courting candle) and bellicose political war cries like *baaskap* (bossdom) as well as many of its choice vulgarities like the memorable *bosbepok* (driven crazy by bush warfare) remains embedded in South African English. Odd to think that were Afrikaans to disappear tomorrow, a good deal would survive in the dictionary of the old enemy.

Oddness does not end there. One of the pleasures of this compulsively readable work is to discover that all sorts of people, encouraged to hate and detest each other, have been borrowing bits of each other's languages for centuries. South African English, true to its mongrel traditions, has simply stolen more thoroughly than any of the others. And that's why it will always offend one party or another.

For a long time, merely being an English speaker in South Africa was politically incorrect. The language itself was seen as



Poisonous relations: three girls oblivious to apartheid, photographed in 1950s Cape Town

Photograph: Camera Press

sedition, inclining its speakers towards what I'll call "*kaffirboetiedom*". And since it does not yet appear in the dictionary and remembering what is and is not offensive, I will translate my coinage as "an unnaturally fraternal feeling for people of African origin".

To the seditious popularity of English, the former regime responded by banning English books, newspapers, attacking English churches and universities with ritual enthusiasm. This was regarded as perfectly fair. Yet whenever English speakers objected to living in a racial zoo designed to protect the mythical purity of Afrikaner nationalists, they were accused by their masters of giving way to *Boerchaai* (hatred of the Boers).

For a long time we were governed by

demented social engineers, aided by the police. Words and their meanings were crucial. The leaders of the rolling tribal conp which ran South Africa did not just take over the radio stations, they captured the dictionaries. Words were to mean what Ministers decided them to mean. Shoddy linguistic goods designed to disguise local lunacy. When the state intended to disenfranchise most of its citizens it declared them "independent". When it planned to murder them it formed the "Civil Co-operation Bureau".

It's good to have recorded here our very own idiot lingo: "parallel development", "separate freedoms" and "National Christian Education". All as empty of meaning as the great sham lexicon of the Soviet era, right up there with "Internation-

alism" and "Enemy of the people".

I'd like to report that those days are gone. In fact the new broadcasting services seem as anxious as ever to reflect and promote government policy. And obediently spray audiences with news as cloudy as soporific gas, designed to pacify or confuse. A poem of mine, celebrating the agonies and fatuities of right wing bigotry was banned recently by the new SABC, just as once it had been banned by the old, a quarter of a century before. I claim a kind of record: the first writer to have work banned under both regimes.

South Africa has a way to go before people resist the urge to check their rifles when politicians talk of freedom. This essential book takes us several steps along the way.

The Blair facts about Dickens and politics

Who would get the Great Inimitable's vote in a 1997 General Election? John Sutherland thinks New Labour has it

Dickens's Journalism Volume II, The Amusements of the People and Other Papers: Reports, Essays and Reviews 1834-51 edited by Michael Slater, Dent, £25

Why should I write for posterity, asked Oscar Wilde, "what has posterity ever done for me?" Quite a lot, Wilde scholars might retort, looking at the library shelves. But of all the Victorians, the writer who has been best served by posterity is Charles Dickens. His literary remains have been curated with the reverence normally reserved for sacred relics. Dickens has been particularly fortunate in attracting a corps of modern British scholars whose brilliance is partnered with the willingness to suppress ego that editorial labour demands. Pre-eminent in this group are Kathleen Tillotson, K. J. Fielding, Philip Collins and Michael Slater, who is now half-way through his four-volume collection of Dickens's journalism.

Had he never penned a word of

fiction, Dickens would live for posterity as one of England's greatest journalists. Indeed, we might pay more attention to this facet of his genius were it not obscured by his fame as a novelist. But journalism is the most ephemeral of the literary arts. Even the best newspaper writing loses its force and relevance within weeks. Wisely, Slater has not attempted a complete reprinting - although he offers in his appendices an up-to-date checklist of all Dickens's hitherto identified periodical writing. Since 19th-century journalism was routinely anonymous, this, in itself, is a valuable resource for Dickensian scholars. Among its many attractions, this collection is impeccably edited and discreetly but amply annotated.

This second volume covers the period from Dickens's first sub-

missions as a staff reporter on the *Morning Chronicle* in 1834 to his first editorial essays for his own weekly, *Household Words*, in 1851. There is also a good selection from Dickens's fiery contributions to the *Examiner* in the late 1840s, many of which have only recently come to light.

Slater has been careful to include some of the familiar plums - "On Duty with Inspector Field", for instance, which reflects Dickens's fascination with "thief-takers" and lays the ground for the Inspector Bucket sub-plot in *Bleak House*. But the value of Slater's enterprise is that unlike previous selections it offers a chronological record of the fluidities in Dickens's thinking on current affairs over 17 intellectually formative years. The journalist who emerges in the early 1830s is opin-

ionated, and sometimes pig-headed, but on most matters wonderfully sensible.

This is a book less to consult than to read through consecutively. Anyone who does so will, I think, know Dickens (Dickens 1834-51, that is) much better than before. So much so that one can play the game of wondering who would get the Great Inimitable's vote in the forthcoming 1997 General Election. Is he a Blairite or a Majorite? One can ignore the early pieces for the *Morning Chronicle* which are, to editorial order, rabidly anti-Tory. In the 1840s, Dickens emerges as something of a swing voter. On law and order, he is undeniably soft on some criminals, but hard on all the causes of crime. The spectacle of judges sending starving single mothers to the gallows for infant-

icide, or transporting children for theft, regularly rouses him to furies of sarcasm. Why do the decent poor turn to criminal ways? - because they are ignorant and desperate and society has made them so.

There is little on political sleaze in the articles here, although much to come in 1855 when - following the corruption revealed by the Crimean War - Dickens becomes the hammer of the Administrative Reform Association. It's a fair guess that Boz would not be writing pieces in *Household Words* supporting Neil Hamilton. On social welfare he is radical. The most ferocious pieces in the collection are those attacking the parsimony of workhouses and *laissez-faire* "baby farms" (childcare centres for the poor) such as that at Tooting in 1848, where 150 children died of

cholera. An unexpected piece in March 1851 about the barbarous treatment of cattle in London's Smithfield slaughter-houses suggests that Dickens might have some sympathy for the Animal Rights Movement. The Liberal-Democrats could be in with a chance.

On the other hand, Charles Dickens in the 1840s is definitely anti-Europe - a continent which he sees as both tyrannical and revolutionary and best kept away from. For the same Europhobic reason he despises "the well-meaning men who would disarm England". Michael Portillo's "Don't mess with us" would find an answering echo from Dickens. He dislikes the Catholic Irish and would be staunchly pro-Union. Dickens hates strikes - particularly railway strikes. They are "unpatriotic" and cannot

be defended by "any honest man". He would bash the unions as gleefully as any Chingford skinhead. Increasingly, as he approaches middle-age, there is a streak in Dickens which believes that prison works. Not, that is, the Molly-coddling "model prisons" such as that set up at Pentonville in 1842 about which he writes a scathing piece ("Pet Prisoners") in 1850. Dickens believes, with Michael Howard, in the sharp shock - and for hardened criminals the shock should be very short, no longer than a body takes to drop ten feet.

My guess is that Dickens would, after much soul-searching, probably go for Blair - if only because New Labour will be friendlier to the homeless outside his house in Doughty Street. But it's nicely poised.

On the trail with Salman, Tristram and Pete

Lachlan Mackinnon relishes an 18th century classic in post-modernist guise

The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman by Martin Rowson, Picador, £15.99

This is Martin Rowson's second graphic work based on a preceding literary text. His first, *The Waste Land* (1990), turned T.S. Eliot's poem into a film noir strip cartoon with dialogue in the style of Raymond Chandler. The last picture within the text shows a hust of Eliot on a scrapheap of cultural detritus: on the spine of a book are the letters "Piranesi", and it is in a Piranesian cellar that we find ourselves at the start of Rowson's *Tristram Shandy*, as though released from the hard exterior of a poem he dislikes into the inner space of a novel he adores.

That sense of inner space proves to be misleading, though. The arches and vaults are in fact the inside of Walter Shandy's resuscitator, and he is about the business of begetting Tristram. Tristram leads his companions, including James Joyce, out of his mother's vagina as the act concludes.

Laurence Sterne's 18th-century novel parodies the association of ideas which John Locke had seen as structuring consciousness. Walter Shandy and his wife have sex monthly, on the night he winds the family clock. In Rowson's version, Mrs Shandy has a gleeful thought of the clock opening its case like a flasher to reveal weights and pendulum metamorphosed into male genitals. One of Rowson's triumphs is to remind us how relentlessly physical the novel is.

More extraordinary, though, is the way in which Rowson's pictorial imagination takes off from Sterne's seemingly artless style. Sterne punctuates largely with dashes, suggesting the flickering feel of his narrator's mind. The novel digresses, offers self-explanatory diagrams of its progress, has one black and one marbled page, and contains seemingly endless parodic documents. In one sense, it is

easy to see it as the prototypical anti-novel, and much in Rowson's treatment supports that view.

Tristram and his companions march on relentlessly through Rowson's version, seemingly oblivious of the several accidents they undergo. But Tristram's is not the only band of travellers across the work's surface. The cartoonist himself and his talking dog Pete make the same journey, commenting on what they see and at times appearing in the same frame as the hero. This new level of narration adds a contemporary angle, as do the portrayals of living people. The servant Obadiah, for instance, is modelled on Ben Pimlott: someone remarkably like Salman Rushdie drops the hot chestnut which falls into the lap of Phutatorius, seemingly the Books Editor of this paper.

From the moment Tristram leads his troupe out of a lovingly detailed bedroom onto a blank space,

though, to end up sitting on the back of Locke's resuscitator, it is clear that this book's primary achievement is pictorial. A gallery of old masters, ranging from Rowlandson and Constable to George Grosz, is echoed. Where Sterne shifts between kinds of literary voice, Rowson shifts between pictorial eyes. This book becomes a magnificent tribute to its original, perhaps the most extraordinary work in the history of illustrations to Sterne and a work in its own right.

But Sterne's novel was also a work of deep feeling which Rowson does less to convey. The *amours* of Uncle Toby and the Widow Wadman are at one level the subject of smut, as Rowson shows, but at another they are profoundly touching, which is not evident here. In the end, we leave Rowson's imaginative space to reopen the covers which contain a larger one.



Low humour: Phutatorius falls foul of a hot chestnut

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A musical magic circle

Sarah Bradford reads the life of an Edwardian Lady with a taste for scandal

Violet: The Life and Loves of Violet Gordon Woodhouse by Jessica Douglas-Home, Harvill, £20

Even today a woman who lived openly and in style with a harem of four men, three of them younger than herself, would be considered out of the ordinary. But then Violet Gordon Woodhouse, the subject of this biography, was an extraordinary woman to whom normal rules (in her view at least) did not apply. In her eyes and those of her friends, her unique artistry on the harpsichord and clavier, coupled with an alluring and dominating personality, entirely justified what to Edwardian society was an uniquely scandalous way of life.

Violet was undoubtedly an enchantress, both in her magical musical powers and her ability to ensnare men and women, husbands, lovers, servants, friends. At the time people attributed this to her exotic Indonesian ancestry; her maternal grandfather married the granddaughter of a Sumatran rane. Violet was exceptionally graceful, small, slim and dark, with brown eyes and jet-black hair (which later in life she dyed an astonishing steely blue). There was, however, nothing exotic about her father's family. The Gwynnes owned an engineering company, Gwynne & Co, based on their invention of the centrifugal pump. James Gwynne (Violet's father) married her mother, May Purvis, against ferocious family opposition undoubtedly based on suspicions about her mixed blood. He was a stubborn, practical man; among his wedding presents to his delicate, romantic bride who was suspected of being tubercular, was the prosaic gift of a respirator.

James Gwynne's ascent to the squirearchy mirrored the rise of the middle classes from trade to landowning typical of the Victorian age. He bought two East Sussex manors, Folkington Place and Wootton, steadily acquiring land from neighbouring aristocrats until by the end of his life it could be said that "the hunt could run all day without ever leaving Squire Gwynne's boundaries." At Folkington there were Canaletto on the walls and a fine library, hothouses, and stables for 20 horses. James was a tyrannical and unsympathetic husband and father in the Victorian mode. Violet was the only one of his seven children never to suffer from his black moods and fits of temper; she could beguile her father into giving her almost anything she wanted. She was the family star, always the centre of attention, her musical genius recognised from the age of seven. By the time she was 20 she was moving in musical circles and occasionally



Violet: orchestrating her affairs at Southover Manor with husband Gordon (left) and Bill Barrington, her lover

playing in public. She longed to be allowed to play professionally but this her father would never allow; despite her horror when told the facts of life by her mother, she realised that marriage was her only route to independence and self-fulfilment.

When she was 23, she set her sights on Gordon Woodhouse, in whom she detected the qualities she needed in a husband - kindness, loyal devotion and an income large enough to support her. Gordon was shy and not very interested in women. Violet made it clear from the start that their marriage was to be platonic and he accepted it. She was already an object of desire for lesbians, although it is not clear how far her relationships went in this direction; she was undoubtedly a flirt and encouraged adoration in both men and

women.

Gordon gave Violet lifelong devotion on her own terms, not even seeming to mind when she fell in love with the Hon William Barrington, heir to an Oxfordshire estate, and he with her, Gordon accepted his wife's obsession with Barrington; by 1901 they were living in a contented ménage à trois at Southover, a household financed and run by Gordon, while Violet concentrated on her music and her role as goddess of the shrine and Bill developed his talent for garden design. It was not long before it became a ménage à cinq as two more Violet worshippers, the rich, witty Max Labouchère, and, later, the Hon Denis Cholmondeley joined the circle. Hovering in the wings would be Violet's female admirers. It was tacitly accepted that Bill was Violet's

real "husband".

Violet's exotic life-style is given added poignancy by being described through the eyes of her plain spinster sister, Dorothy, who cherished an unrequited tendresse for Gordon. "Bobo" as she called Violet, remained to her an object of wonderment as, with exquisite selfishness and absolute single-mindedness, she created her own image, indulging her taste for unusual and expensive clothes and objects, and developed her musical talent.

On a typical day in London, she would spend the morning practising then sally forth to Fortnum and Mason, accompanied by her "tail" of four admirers who would compete with each other to buy her presents. Music was at the centre of her life, she was friends with Debussy, Sir Thomas

Beecham, the composer, Ethel Smyth (who of course fell in love with her), Dolmetsch, Diaghilev. She gave Sunday concerts at her house in London, where, among others, the young Osbert Sitwell, Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen were transfixed by her performances.

World War One broke up the magic circle; Denis was captured, Max killed and Bill sent to the Middle East. A combination of the war and Violet's extravagance had such a severe effect on Gordon's finances that Violet was forced to play for money; in her late 40s she was at the zenith of her abilities and much in demand. Delius wrote of her that she was "a real artist - who plays the harpsichord most beautifully and plays us all the lovely English music of the 15th and 16th centuries - also Bach and Scarlatti." In the post-war years her skills reached new heights, touching even the unmusical, like Roger Fry. During World War Two she developed an intense relationship with Sacheverell Sitwell who encouraged her in a late-flowering passion for Domenico Scarlatti.

Jessica Douglas-Home has a real gift for the evocation of the spirit of place, particularly in the chapters on Violet's post-war life with Gordon, Bill and Denis at Nether Lypiatt in Gloucestershire, their home from 1923 to the end of their lives. Her descriptions of the house and surrounding countryside come alive, as do the Arts and Crafts circles in Gloucestershire, the "Artists of the Golden Valley" patronised by Violet. Gordon Woodhouse having been cut out of his mother's will because of her disapproval of Violet's ménage, Violet had her usual stroke of luck when the butler murdered Gordon's sisters and their inheritance passed to him. She could now afford every luxury; visitors to Nether Lypiatt were struck by the wonderful food orchestrated by Gordon, the beauty of the garden created by Bill, and the sight of Violet's two Pekingese being taken for a drive in her chauffeur-driven Daimler. Jessica Douglas-Home brilliantly illuminates Violet's life and the intricacies of her friendships while never losing sight of the importance to her of her music.

Violet was a monster but nonetheless a life-enhancer and a performance artist of real importance. With skilful use of letters and diaries and painstaking research, Douglas-Home has contrived an entrancing portrait of this unusual woman which will enchant even those who are uninterested in music.



The book you meant to read

Candide (1759) by Voltaire

Plot: Voltaire's philosophical tale is also a miniatured picaresque novel. Candide is a naïve lad living in Westphalia. Pangloss, a disciple of Leibniz, teaches him that all things are part of God's beautiful design. Candide is thrown out of his country haven for fancying Cunegonde, the owner's daughter. Forcibly enlisted in the Bulgarian army, Candide is almost killed. He is depressed to learn from Pangloss that Cunegonde is dead. They go to Lisbon and witness an earthquake. Pangloss is hanged at a celebratory auto-da-fé. Cunegonde turns up. She has become a sex toy. Candide kills her lovers. The pair escape to South America but are again separated. Candide visits Eldorado, before returning to Europe with Martin, a gloomy inversion of Pangloss, who believes the world is ruled by the devil. Eventually Candide is reunited with a disfigured Cunegonde and with Pangloss who survived hanging to remain as jolly as ever. They all retire to a rural retreat where Pangloss continues to praise the best of all possible worlds. Candide replies: "we must cultivate our garden."

Theme: A satire on systems of thought which are not founded on experience. Voltaire also despises the notion of a God who could dispense suffering for the sake of some higher good. Conversely, humanity's irrational resilience is celebrated.

Style: A model of clarity. The use of euphemism paradoxically exposes the horrors of the real world.

Chief strengths: An analysis of the unreasonable desire to rationalise suffering. Characters are nearly killed, permanently crippled, forced to witness unspeakable horrors, yet bounce back with insane elasticity.

Chief weaknesses: When Voltaire gets hold of a joke he is unwilling to let go.

What they thought of it then: Topped the 18th century bestseller lists with 20 pirated editions coming out in 1759, together with English and Italian translations.

What we think of it now: Admired in France because it reflects the qualities the French most admire in themselves: lightness of touch coupled with philosophical profundity.

Responsible for: Waugh's *Decline and Fall* which similarly pits a naïve optimist against a hostile world.

Gavin Griffiths



The books you listen to

Brush up on your Conrad. Next year's most fashionable classic author, with a reading of *The Secret Agent* (HarperCollins, 3hrs, £7.99), his tale of revolutionary terrorism inspired by the bombing of Greenwich Observatory in 1894. Joss Ackland's voice is mesmerising.

George Orwell spent five years in the Indian Imperial Police in Burma in the 1930s. His *Burmese Days* (Penguin, 3hrs, £7.99) tells how a corrupt Burmese magistrate manipulates the snobby Brits into betraying an Indian doctor's misplaced confidence in the humour of the Raj. Tim Pigott-Smith is splendidly pukka sahib.

Christina Hardyment

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Neil desperandum at the court of King Rupert

Andreas Whittam Smith ponders the point of a vainglorious memoir

Full Disclosure by Andrew Neil, Macmillan, £20

Andrew Neil has written an account of his eleven years as editor of the *Sunday Times* from 1983 in order to prove something. He wants us to know that he did a fine job and he wishes us to understand the malign reasons which led Rupert Murdoch to ease him out. For my part, I hoped to discover the mainspring of Neil's character. Why did he produce news pages which were animated by hate? The editor and his team seemed to detest many of the people and institutions about whom the *Sunday Times* wrote and wanted to persuade the readers to loathe them too. And why is a man with so many achievements to his name so vainglorious? He claims to be more impressed by deeds than words, and yet he feels compelled to write a 470-page justification of his career.

Neil thinks there is a diseased establishment in power. At grammar school in Paisley and university at Glasgow he developed a dislike for the "peculiar combination of snobbery and incompetence" which he believes characterises the Establishment (which he sometimes calls English and sometimes British). He soon goes to the *Economist*, Lazy and complacent, the Establishment seemed to be presiding over decline and thus "offended the patriotism my parents had instilled in me." He lumps together the public school system and Oxbridge, not seeing that the former is in retreat while people like himself have long dominated the two ancient English universities. In his view, the meritocracy had made great gains but was being driven back by High Tories and a left-wing chattering class. Yet you can agree with all this without burning with hatred.

By contrast, Neil writes sweetly about his parents (plain, decent folk), about his brother (who was tolerant and enjoyed their father's good nature) and about his upbringing (a happy, uncomplicated childhood). There seems nothing in his early days to explain the dark side of his character. Nor



Neil: removed because he became too famous?

After leaving university, he joined the Conservative Research Department in London. In other words, he is handed the key to the Establishment's front door. Politics, it has been said, are nothing more than a means of rising in the world. He soon goes to the *Economist*, from where, ten years later, Murdoch picks him to be editor of the *Sunday Times* at the age of 34. This is the primrose path.

But it had led him to a destination even more disagreeable than the Establishment; for he has arrived at the "Court of the Sun King". Neil gives the best account I know, outside the history of totalitarian states, of what it is like to work in a situation in which all power is held by a single person. Strong-willed, successful, first generation entrepreneurs often behave as dictators. The advantages are quick decision-making, daring strategies and a permanent state of high alert. It is also cruel, heartless, humiliating and draining of the personalities of those involved.

As Neil puts it, you are not a director or manager or an editor; you are a courtier - rewarded with

money and status by a grateful King as long as you serve his purpose, dismissed outright or demoted to a remote corner of the empire when you have ceased to please him or outlived your usefulness. He may intervene in matters great or small. He is constantly on your mind. "I wonder how the King is today" is the first question a good courtier asks himself when he wakes up. However the courtiers themselves soon become worse than His Majesty. He is brutal with them; they are, if anything, even more unpleasant to their underlings. Neil admits that he himself was quick to penalise failure and slow to praise success; he became a "harsh, unforgiving editor". Nor is there any trust between courtiers; they will always ditch a colleague to obtain the King's favour. I had understood that this was how Murdoch's media empire worked. Neil has provided compelling detail.

The next stage in this autobiographical project is to prove how good the *Sunday Times* was during our hero's period as editor. With the figures for circulation, paging and advertising revenue, the case is

easily made. But we are also treated to a rehashing of old *Sunday Times* campaigns and stories. This serves to jog the memory rather than to provide fresh insights. It comes across as boastful, and lacking in nuance. Newspapers are said to write the first rough draft of history; Neil just gives us the same, uncorrected versions again.

Finally, we come to the point of the book. Neil was removed, he argues, because he was becoming too famous. He says he was warned early in 1994: "Rupert resents you becoming a public figure in your own right". Murdoch, he believed, bridled every time word reached him in America that Neil had been on radio or television. The courtier was becoming too powerful, too independent. This was the true reason, Neil argues: Murdoch felt he was losing control of the *Sunday Times*.

I do not buy this story. Neil had begun to present the early morning news show on a London talk station. The owner of the *Sunday Times* had every right to resent this and believe that it was a diversion of his editor's creative energy. Moreover, newspaper owners generally welcome the sort of fame that came Neil's way as a result of having to defend and explain the newspaper on television and radio and he interviewed on the big issues of the day. It is seen as free, prime time publicity; indeed nowadays journalists who cannot handle this side of the job are unlikely to become editors. It is hard to believe that Murdoch has a different view.

However it scarcely matters that *Full Disclosure* fails to convince in the way Neil wishes. Leaving aside the occasional repetition which indicates undue haste in writing and editing, the book is very readable and interesting. As well as the angry, boastful Andrew Neil, we also meet the modest, self-knowing, dignified Neil whose account of his affair with Pamela Bordas is heartily and affecting told.

Cry Mother, if you will...

D J Taylor on nuns and honeymoons

Ripples of Dissent: Women's Stories of Marriage from the 1890s edited by Bridget Bennett, Dent, £25

In our excitement over the artificial flowerings of the 1980s *fin de siècle* we tend to forget the existence of another kind of late-19th century ferment: agitation over the role of women. Although it is difficult to think of a time in the past 150 years when English society wasn't exercised by this absorbing topic, Bridget Bennett's lead-in to her aptly-titled collection has no trouble in demonstrating that in the 1890s it reached boiling point. Mainstream literature of the period is full of idiosyncratic, deracinated female figures, whether "New Women" like Hardy's Sue Bridehead, rebelling against conventional social arrangements, or the "superfluous female" of the Victorian census return who provided George Gissing with the theme for his grim novel, *The Odd Women*.

Ripples of Dissent assembles a variety of feminine magazine stories on the woman - specifically marriage - question, chosen equally from English and American sources. While they range from the outwardly prophetic, nearly all of them manage to call into question one or other of the 19th century's sexual orthodoxies. Most ominous of all, perhaps, is the note of resentment levelled by younger women at the elders who betrayed them - the heroine of George Egerton's "Virgin Soil", for example, who comes back to reproach the mother who encouraged her to marry a brute - coupled with a desire to escape the horrors of the average late-Victorian honeymoon. Janey, in Margaret Oliphant's "A Story of a Wedding Tour", travelling with her ghastrly husband, simply gives him the slip and takes refuge in a French village.

Not everything here is as explicit as the reprimands of Egerton's Flo ("Cry, Mother, if you will: you don't know how much you have to cry for"). Yet even the quieter contributions are directed at the notion of independence: Mary Wilkins Freeman's "A New England Nun",

for instance, in which a woman whose engagement has lasted for the 14 years of her fiance's absence abroad, rejects the man on his return merely as a means of preserving her settled and agreeable existence. Interestingly, the boundaries being extended here are mostly those of subject matter rather than treatment - and no doubt the moral ukases of the contemporary magazine market still prohibited anything like a realistic discussion of sex.

Inevitably, one or two of the 31 stories don't really fit into the subversive category chosen by their compiler: Violet Jacob's "Prudence and Colonel Dornier" is just an engaging account of a young woman being helped to meet the right man, while E Nesbit's "John Charrington's Wedding" is a gruesome story in which - as far as one can make out - the girl marries her bridegroom two hours after the latter's death in a carriage accident.

You wonder too, about the wisdom (literary, that is - it makes perfect sense commercially) of including some of the American material, given the profound differences in social conditions and outlook. Tommy in Willa Cather's "Tommy the Unsentimental", is less a teenage feminist rebelling against her place in society, than a specimen of the "tomboy", a staple of early American fiction.

Individual gems stand out. In particular, "Suggestion" by Ada Levenson is a revelation: six or seven pages of glittering chatter placed in the mouth of a decadent young teenage boy busy rearranging the love lives of members of his family in an atmosphere of cheery amorality, and a kind of pontoon bridge linking the '90s twilight with the proto-modernism of Ronald Firbank. Elegantly produced and edited, and with excellent biographical notes, *Ripples of Dissent* fails only at the price hurdle. But whatever the merits of charging £25 for a hardback that involved no copyright payments to authors, this is a paperback worth waiting for.

All overs bar the shouting

Harry Pearson looks back on the cricket World Cup

On 31st January 1996 a suicide bombing in Colombo killed over 80 people. Meanwhile in Lahore the local authorities were brightening up their city by placing thousands of gaily coloured papier mâché mushrooms along roadside verges. In Delhi Rupert Murdoch's men were locked in a protracted battle for satellite TV rights. Over in Calcutta the Peerless Hotel offered a special cricket menu featuring "Malik's Fishy Biryani".

Somewhere in the midst of all this violence, high finance, scandal and surreal hype a major cricket competition managed to get played. The winners, joyfully, were the Sri Lankans in whose war-torn country the beaten finalists, Australia had steadfastly refused to play. Shane Warne, the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister had opined of the Australians' star bowler, is a sissie.

The 1996 World Cup in all its mad, multi-sponsored splendour is the subject of a pair of illuminating and entertaining books, Robert Winder's *Hell For Leather* and *War Minus The Shooting* by Mike Marqusee. It is a measure of the breadth of the tournament and the very different approaches of the authors that there is remarkably little overlap between the two. Marqusee, an American socialist who developed a passion for the game when visiting India in the 1970s tries to "find out about cricket and what it meant to particular people in particular places", with the added proviso of avoiding watching England at all costs, sensible chap.

Winder, as a cricket writer for this newspaper, was, on the other hand, following the team which Sunil Gavaskar would, with cruel accuracy, characterise as "the competition's sacrificial goats", and understandably therefore, takes as his main theme the parlous state of the English game.

Mike Marqusee has a detailed knowledge of the politics of the sub-continent and *War Minus The Shooting* (Heinemann, £12.99) - the title comes from George Orwell's jaundiced comment on the nature of international sport - serves as a useful and eye-opening primer. The book attempts to place the World Cup within its social framework while at the same time highlighting the way its financial power served to bolster the cause of economic globalisation. It is an aim which might have set lesser writers down a path towards earnestness, but Marqusee's keen ear for the absurd aspects of corporate-speak (after the horror of the Colombo bombing an official from World Bank was moved to comment: "We hope Sri Lanka will come through this difficult period by adopting correct financial policies"), his zest for cricket and his obvious love for the

countries through which he is travelling ensure that this is a journey which is educational but never dull.

Reports on matches are interspersed with wide ranging chats and interviews with everyone from schoolchildren to high officials. Best of all is a meeting with the venerable Pakistani cricket commentator, Omar Kureishi, who tells the author: "Only two things really bind this country (Pakistan) together. One is war and the other is cricket". It is to be hoped that, if nothing else, *War Minus The Shooting* will serve finally to disavow anyone still innocent (or indeed cynical) enough to espouse the view that sport has nothing to do with politics.

Unlike Marqusee, Robert Winder was experiencing sub-continental cricket for the first time. Where *War Minus The Shooting* ricochets off events at various unexpected angles, *Hell For Leather: A Modern Cricket Journey* (Gollancz, £17.99) tends to meet cricket with the centre of the bat and is none the worse for it.

Winder spends much of the early part of the competition with the England team and provides a vivid account of their unsteady progress through a string of disastrous performances and diplomatic gaffs. The author is broadly sympathetic to the players, commenting, acutely and accurately, that years of playing cricket has left them "institutionalised by the game".

But along with empathy there is wry humour too, particularly when England's cricket supremo, Ray Illingworth, hoves into view with his matchless mix of bluntness, bafflement and buck-passing - "That was Mike's decision" seems to be his catchphrase. The account of the shambolic opening ceremony and its aftermath - organiser Gianfranco Lunetta should, wrote one Indian newspaper, "be tied with a rope and detained in Calcutta" - is a comic gem. That something has gone seriously wrong with English cricket is undeniable. The poor state of our national summer game is perhaps best summed up in Winder's account of a meeting before the South Africa-England clash between the South African High Commissioner and Dennis Silk, Chairman of the TCCB. "May the best team win," the South African says. "I hope not," Silk replies.

Winder outlines the problems of English cricket with clarity and concision and details possible far-reaching solutions to them, too. Whatever becomes of the game on these shores, however, both authors agree that the centre of the cricket world has now shifted from Lords to South Asia. With the zest and passion for the game that exists there, that is surely no bad thing.

Pinned and wriggling

Oliver Swanton skateboards through the supermarket of style

Style Surfing by Ted Polhemus, Thames & Hudson, £14.95, *The Customized Body* by Ted Polhemus and Housk Randall, Serpent's Tail, £15.99

Ted Polhemus is an anthropologist and true to the profession he has spent years living amongst the peoples he has dedicated his life to observing, submerging himself in their culture and desperately trying to decipher their strange tribal ways. But not, you understand, on the wide-open African savannah or in the deepest, darkest Peruvian jungle. Since the mid-Seventies Polhemus has spent his energies clubbing in London, now officially (again) the fashion capital of the universe. The style-conscious British youth has long been a source of amazement to the world and Polhemus is equally bewitched. Cataloguing their every move he makes a good stab at unravelling the ultimate question: why do they wear what they wear?

Like his *Street Style* book and exhibition at the V&A, *The Customized Body* and *Style Surfing* are both glossy, visually stunning books; easy, quasi-intellectual reading that will sit as well on the coffee table as on the social studies shelf of the university library. Polhemus is obsessed with human packaging and the presentation of self ("a person's chosen image is a more effective resumé of their inner self than anything they may put into words") but thankfully he does not make dry pronouncement from on high - he is down there with the kids, hanging out with the movers and shakers.

By breaking up the text of each book with "case studies" from Tokyo to New York to Manchester, Polhemus provides a much wider, more acceptable summary of where it's at. There's Sally with sixteen rings piercing her labia; Xed with a holt through his penis; Lazer who wears nothing but fluorescent paint and jewellery; fetish-obsessive Kaisu who nurses the erotically wounded; Tina whose gender is non-specific; Chris and his BMX bike; Marissa and her Mexican wrestling masks.

Polhemus' triumph is his exploration of the Modern Primitive. Re-evaluating and reviving tattoo, scarification, piercing, masks and even to that one of brief items chosen by Wallace Stevens to form something as satisfyingly elliptical as his poetry. The late John ("Jock") Murray is more in the spirit of the volumes of *Christmas Crackers* by his friend John Julius Norwich. It is embellished with many drawings by Beryl Cook, Benjamin, Osbert Lancaster and John Piper. Edited by

reveling in its expression of modernism: Dior's 1947 launch of the New Look drew a bold, thick line between the austerity of the war years and the luxurious, sexy Fifties. But what's left for today's generation as they speed towards the end of the millennium? Burdened by the economic and environmental and political havoc wreaked by the baby boomers they know that the next century holds nothing but insurmountable problems. Unable and unwilling to stare the future down, they recycle youth cults and ancient tribal customs, trying to make sense of their heritage.

Although Polhemus is not the first to spot the trend (Douglas Coupland's *Generation X* or Claire also picked 'n' mixed - Sixties hippie chick yesterday, Fifties housewife today, Seventies glam rock tomorrow) his is the more comprehensive. Teenagers now have no choice but to surf (as in "channel surfing" or "surf the net") popular culture because the linear transition of fashion ended with the advent of punk. Everything that followed was merely a rehearsed version of the past. A shopping trip through what Polhemus calls "The Supermarket of Style".

Although his observations are enlightening Polhemus places too much emphasis on the punk movement. He may well think that punk said it all, leaving nothing left for Eighties youth: the age of the teen did die as the demographic hump of baby boomers entered middle-age. But Polhemus is blinded by the brilliance of the so-called inventors of punk, Westwood and McLaren. He has taken punk's battle cry of "No Future" too literally and completely brushed over hip hop - the biggest and most important street culture to take the world by storm; currently being recycled within the vibrant British jungle and skateboard scenes.

Youth culture has not run out of steam yet. There may never be a Next Big Thing, but that is because today's youth have learnt not to be duped and manipulated by fashion gurus who announce "beige is the new black". As Polhemus acknowledges, street style now bubbles up to the catwalk rather than the other way round. So whatever we'll be wearing in the third millennium you can rest assured you won't see it at the London Fashion Show first.



Matt, from *The Customized Body*: "I enjoy the feeling of power and inner peace it gives me"

A delectable literary pursuit

Christopher Hawtree picks over a store of allusions

A Gentleman Publisher's Commonplace Book by John G Murray, John Murray, £9.95

All of us carry about a commonplace book. That is, within the book and volume of the brain there is a store of quotation and allusions to be deployed when the occasion calls for something toney. Meet as it is to set these down. Evelyn Waugh remarked that "the keeping of such a book is a delectable literary pursuit - very rare nowadays - which requires many high gifts if it is to be worthwhile." One regrets that he did not do so, but they are not so rare as all that, and some gifted compilers even proffer a version in their lifetimes. Justification for this came from Rupert Hart-Davis who prefaced *A Beggars in Purple* with a 1642 remark by Thomas Fuller: "A Commonplace-book contains many notions in

garrison, whence the owner may draw out an army into the field."

When millions are demanded for purported novels under the names of purported celebrities, it is combative to name this delightful, elegantly-produced little garrison *A Gentleman Publisher's Commonplace Book*. It is not a volume akin to those of Auden and Forster, which are built upon substantial extracts, or even to that one of brief items chosen by Wallace Stevens to form something as satisfyingly elliptical as his poetry. The late John ("Jock") Murray is more in the spirit of the volumes of *Christmas Crackers* by his friend John Julius Norwich. It is embellished with many drawings by Beryl Cook, Benjamin, Osbert Lancaster and John Piper. Edited by

Murray's son, it continues the family passion for typeface and design, - but does not reveal whether he shares the "strong belief that the best results were achieved if one was unhindered by clothes."

Careful to put the word in quotation-marks, Murray's son suggests that one "surf" the volume. Downing shorts, here goes. Unlike Geoffrey Braithwaite, Jock Murray did not forbid the inclusion of Logan Pearsall Smith's "People say life is the thing, but I prefer reading." There is ample evidence here that Murray was far from study-bound. He even credits a phrase to John Lennon, difficult as it is to picture his listening to *Double Fantasy* and tapping along to Yoko's orgasmic cries before the needle reached "Beautiful Boy".

He is delighted to find a sign in a Westmoreland butcher's window: "John Murray, seller of tripe." An American couple, married for 65 years, said that they had not divorced sooner as "we felt we ought to wait until the children were dead." "Laugh and the world laughs with you. Snore and you sleep alone" is credited to Anthony Burgess, who was surprised to find the same mistake in a dictionary of quotations, "but I'm not grumbling." Maurice Baring recorded one doctor asking another for advice about a pregnancy. "The father was syphilitic, the mother tuberculous. Of the children born the first was blind, the second died, the third was deaf and dumb, the fourth was tuberculous. What

would you have done? 'I would have ended the next pregnancy.' 'Then you would have murdered Beethoven.'"

Agatha Christie was wittier than many suppose: "the advantage of being married to an archaeologist is that the older you get, the more interested he becomes in you." One might indeed discern an undertow of decay and death, summed up by John Gielgud. "Most of my friends seem to be either dead, extremely deaf or living on the wrong side of Kent."

One could review this volume several times and come up with a different piece each time. In fact, it is worth buying for the disorienting of Rose Macaulay's observation that "a house unkempt cannot be so distressing as a life unloved."

Royal Festival Hall
on the South Bank

Literature Events

Readings/Discussions/Talks

- 13 Nov. **Essays, Melissa Bann - A Vindication of the Rights of Woman**
Writer and journalist Melissa Bann presents her 90's version of Mary Wollstonecraft's passionate plea for equality written in 1792.
- 14 Nov. **New Voices, Mick Jackson and Meera Syal**
From tales of a Victorian eccentric, to growing up as an Asian in a Midlands mining village, these two writers present their contrasting novelistic debuts.
- 19 Nov. **Essays, Eamon McCann - A Modest Proposal**
In true Swiftian tradition, McCann suggests modern methods for disposing of unwanted people.
- 21 Nov. **Essays, David Pearce - On Miracles**
Rationalism versus the supernatural, David Pearce's essay on how the Bible has taken on by Oxford Professor of Philosophy.
- 27 Nov. **Essays, Will Hutton - The Rights of Man**
Author of the bestselling *The State We're In* raises critical questions about the nature of constitution and democracy in a 1996 version of Tom Paine's essay.
- 28 Nov. **New Voices, Matthew Francis and Justin Quinn**
Two new poetic voices present their first collections for an evening of lyrical, witty and evocative work.

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Paperbacks

By Christopher Hirst and Lucasta Miller

Tom: The Unknown Tennessee Williams by Lyle Leverich (Sceptre, £8.99)
Describing his subject as "the most enigmatic personality I have ever encountered", Leverich tells the story up to 1945 when Tom Williams experienced what he termed "the catastrophe of success" with *The Glass Menagerie* and changed his name. Every page contains a rich lode of fascinating material, especially concerning his Dickensian family: a cold, miserly father, a doting, prudish mother and a schizophrenic sister whose lobotomy is the most painful section of the book.

Thinking of England by Kitty Churchill (Abacus, £6.99) A game sort of gal,

Miss Kitty has produced a *Which*-style guide to the kinky foibles of England's unbuttoned suburbs. Lugging along her (literally) long-suffering husband Dominic and gay pal Ben, she assiduously seeks out 57 varieties of bondage, fetishism and dressing-up. The result is more peculiar than arousing, rather like an account of native ceremonies in New Guinea. It is also most amusing but you can tell that Kitty's heart isn't really in it: "In six months, I amassed a grand total of two orgasms related to research."

A Pacifist's War by Frances Partridge (Phoenix, £6.99)
The customary astringent wit of Partridge's diary is only intermittently displayed

in this dark, brooding volume. At the heart of the book is a vicious row with fellow Bloomsburyite Gerald Brenan about the Partridges' pacifism (Ralph P fought bravely in World War I). Some lighter entries might have come from Alan Bennett's *Forty Years On*: "During an appalling raid, Hester heard two voices discussing German airmen: 'They say they're heavily made-up, you know, red nails, lipstick, CRASH BOOM, BANG!'"

Sir Phoebe's Ma by Zoe Teale (Phoenix, £5.99)
Pleasingly unpretentious autobiographical first novel about a 22-year-old London girl who spends a year teaching English at a high school in Japan. As well as



Rose Williams: Tennessee Williams's sister

the expected culture shock, the heroine has to deal with the unwanted attentions of Mr Moriya, her greasy middle-aged department head. She spends much of the novel trying to figure out what she means to him: substitute daughter, romantic attachment or the personification of Englishness - in the end, facing up to the realisation that she is as fixated on him as he is on her.

The Private Parts of Women by Lesley Glaister (Bloomsbury, £5.99) Sex and secrets dominate this macabre exploration of female identity. In a fit of self-loathing following an abortion, Iris runs away from her husband and children and ends up living in a dreary Sheffield street. Her next door neighbour is Tricie, an octogenarian Bible-basher suffering from multiple-personality

disorder. The style is stream-of-consciousness, but the plot remains tight enough to give this horror story the sustained momentum of a thriller.

Asking Questions: an anthology of encounters with Naim Attallah (Quartet, £12.50) These are shrewdly conducted question-and-answer sessions, which read like conversations not interrogations. Of the 25 interviews, Lord Dacre confesses to snobbery, Ernst Gombrich hints sadly at emptiness in his personal life, and Quentin Crisp, after a lifetime of unfulfilment, reveals his disillusion with sexual intercourse: "often actually painful, sometimes uncomfortable, sometimes nasty".

travel & outdoors

School for chalet girls
(and boys).....12
Garden slugs and
other tales.....16
Country walk..... 17



Tourist Venice: it doesn't have to be this way. A cross-canal hop in an old gondola, used as a ferry, costs 10p

Photograph: Magnum/Emts Haas

The finest secrets of Venice

By Jonathan Glancey

Venetian children have taken to calling gondolas "Japanese boats" over the past few years. This is hardly surprising, because apart from making trips with these couples, every one of these elaborately gilded craft spends its day ferrying intensely-scheduled groups of Japanese tourists up and down the Grand Canal. At the prices asked by the singing gondoliers, gondolas are, for the rest of us, a forbidden form of transport.

Luckily, old gondolas are employed as *traghetto*, or ferries, to take shoppers backwards and forwards across the Grand Canal at several points, and all for the bargain price of 200 lire – rather less than 10p. It is astonishing that this open secret is so little seized upon by day trippers and visitors on weekend breaks. For here is one of those near-perfect moments when, standing upright in a tipsy gondola insinuating its way between *vaporetti*, and string bag in hand, one can pretend to be one of the 70,000 or so surviving locals.

My favourite *traghetto* ride is across the Grand Canal to and from the fish and fruit and vegetable markets at Rialto. Not only are the market stalls a powerful sensual stimulus at six in the morning, when most tourists are snoozing in the city's costly hotels, but as the food in most Venetian restaurants is horrid – stale, overcooked and over-priced, as it has been since British tourists first arrived here in the 18th century – they are something of a lifesaver.

Most of Venice's best kept secrets are hidden well away from the Grand Canal, although after a trip to the markets, dip into Da Mori, a bar frequented almost exclusively by Venetians, and in particu-

lar by *gondolieri* limbering up for the day's lucrative "O solo mio" with a stringent *caffè corretto* or two.

Even if you have a reasonable grip on Venetian dialect, everyone will know you are a foreigner at Da Mori: you will be the only person able to walk through the narrow door to the street without having to turn sideways. Unlike effete Brits, the working men of Venice are endowed with some of the broadest shoulders this side of the pages of Marvel comic books.

Suitably refreshed at Da Mori (try the local sweet, fizzy red wine, which is excellent on an autumn day), set off in search of secret Venice. On my biennial trips to the city, I rarely pass by the shabby-looking church of San Pantalon without stopping by to gawp at the extraordinary Baroque painting that fills its dark and lofty ceiling.

A 200 lire coin in the light-box brings Gian Antonio Fumiani's operatic *troupe* to all-singing, all-dancing life. Angels and saints appear to cavort up into the heavens, while others dangle their canvas legs over the side of the cornice above the veiled heads of black-clad ladies chanting decads of the rosary. This is much better than telly, but you will need to have a store of 200 lire coins in your coat pocket to keep this late-17th-century version of cinerama glowing in front of your incredulous eyes. The bravura painting seems all the more poignant when you learn that, after toiling at it for 24 years, Fumiani fell to his death from the scaffolding.

There is nothing left of the painter's work today save what you see above you, which is quite enough for any British tourist brought up in a world of chaste churches knocked about a hit by

Cromwell and strict, disciplinary chapels. There is, however, a butcher's block of saintly relics scattered throughout the rest of Venice; I cannot recommend too highly the tiny niche in a dark corner of SS Giovanni e Paolo, the city's cavernous 14th-century Dominican church, in which you find the foot of St Catherine, flesh peeling off tiny bones like old parchment.

Nor should you miss St Nicetas, an early Roman bishop whose engagingly gruesome cadaver, cloaked in ecclesiastical splendour, rests away the centuries in the venerable church of S Nicolò dei Mendicanti (the church of Santa Claus, or Father Christmas, whose bones the Venetians claimed to have rescued more than a thousand years ago); the saint was "chiuso per il restauro" for some years, but is happily back in this pretty little church in the shadow of the city jail, where few tourists tread.

The most easily overlooked churches are those at the eastern end of the city, beyond the Arsenal, the old dockyards where the ships of the once invincible Venetian navy were built (a number 5 has taken you through the Arsenal; otherwise it remains a military zone, and only a letter to the admiral in charge will allow you to visit here on foot). Here, by the municipal gasworks, is San Francesco della Vigna (started by Sansovino in 1534; completed by Palladio in 1572). Inside – you will normally be the only tourist – is one of my favourite paintings, the joyous *Madonna and Child Enthroned* by Antonio la Negroponte (1450), in which the Virgin poses in a rose bower flanked by orange trees. She is not as fine as Bellini's *Madonnas* (the artist's gorgeous, pouting mistress stood in for the BVM), but

these are almost too easy to find (upstairs at the Accademia, first room on your left).

Another exceptional Madonna is the haunting Virgin who, given shape by some anonymous 13th-century mosaic artist, shimmers in gold and blue from the apse of Torcello Cathedral: this is the austere, yet magnetic deconsecrated church on the remote island of Torcello (number 12 bus from Fondamenta Nuove) which also hosts an epic and truly disturbing 12th-century *Apotheosis of Christ and Last Judgement* on its west wall; you can almost feel the slithering jaws of hell sinking into your worthless flesh as you quake before this medieval nightmare.

On the subject of islands on the fringe of Venice, there are three others I would recommend, but the last comes with a proviso. The first is San Francesco del Deserto (gondola from Burano, reached by a number 12 from Fondamenta Nuove) to visit the lovely garden tended here by the Franciscan monks. The second is San Lazzaro degli Armeni (number 10 from Riva degli Schiavoni), where Armenian monks will, if you ask nicely, show you their revelatory collection of books and manuscripts. Some date back to the fifth century and are a privilege to be able to read in the sanctity of the venerable library here.

My third island is a difficult one. Not only must you negotiate a trip over to Lazzaretto Vecchio by punt (not easy), but you must also endeavour not to return with a stray dog in tow – so long as the British quarantine laws continue. For here, among classical architectural fragments, Venice hides its canine waifs and strays, and a pathetic spectacle it makes. Having met the monks and their gar-

deo on San Francesco del Deserto, it is worth remembering that Venice is home to a bed of exquisite gardens, nearly all of them hidden behind towering walls flanking the city's shoulder-wide alleyways. Or, in the case of the romantic vegetable garden cultivated behind Palladio's Il Redentore (that most perfect church, consecrated in 1592 and built to celebrate the end of the plague of 1575-76 that killed 46,000 Venetians) behind a monument visited by countless tourists, precious few of whom know what greenery sprouts in the shadow of its Byzantine dome.

By now you will be tired and hungry; after all, we have covered a fair amount of ground, or water, in search of secret Venice. May I recommend lunch at the Rosticceria San Bartolomeo (Calle della Bissa, off Campo San Bartolomeo)? You will have to stand up and eat, I'm afraid, but you will be very much in the company of Venetians; join them as they tuck into

heaped and cheap plates of fish stew, liver and polenta.

This pit-stop will give you the strength to tackle one of two final and fascinating trips to see the Venetian lagoon's all-but-secret wildlife (there is more to Venice than pigeons and cocky little dogs drawn from paintings by Carpaccio); take your pick of a rainy afternoon spent in the gloriously old-fashioned and museologically incorrect Natural History Museum (Fondaco dei Turchi), or take a trip out to Chioggia, a working-class Venice in miniature, as everyone here describes it. Chioggia is at the furthest reach of the lagoon. Home to one of the finest fish markets in Europe, it is also the stamping ground of Signor Bossi's extreme right-wing northern Italian separatist movement. Admire the fish, but do not talk politics; for here you can even afford to ride around the canals on a "Japanese boat", and that must be the greatest Venetian secret of all.

City essentials: Venice

Jonathan Glancey flew from Gatwick to Venice with Alitalia, not an experience he would repeat, however, since the DC-9 developed an engine fault immediately after take-off and he spent an unscheduled two hours on the ground at Brussels airport. Next time, he says, he will try a different

airline. Italy Sky Shuttle (0181-748 1333) has November flights for £163 on a Monarch charter from Gatwick, or £192 on British Airways from Heathrow.

From the airport to Venice, a taxi will cost around £25. Local buses run every 30 minutes or so for £1.

Ask the Italian State Tourist Office, 1 Princes St, London W1R 8AY (0171-408 1254) for a map of the city, but do not expect it to be entirely accurate.

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An unlikely renaissance is about to begin. By James Rampton

Photograph: Brian Harris

Ms Grasty admits that the town is never going to be another Florence, but: "I say to the sneerers, 'come and have another look...'. We're extending the use of Croydon. People won't come here just to work or shop. They'll come to have a good time, as well."

And we, the Ms Grasty lists famous old Croydons - Peggy Ashcroft (a theatre is named after her), David Lean (there are films in his honour), Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (his former residence is now an old people's home) and Kate Moss. Now there's something for the marketers to work on - the Kate Moss Trail.

'Cyburban Fantasies' runs at the Croydon Clocktower (0181-2531180 until 1 December.

The town's only problem (leaving aside drugs, delinquency and laziness) is that many of those who run the travel companies commute to Crawley rather than live there. Among senior executives, there seems to be a competition to see who can live furthest away - currently held by a chap who drives daily from Aylesbury, a 140-mile round trip. Even loyal sons and daughters of the town, who once made Crawley maternity hospital the most productive place in Britain, have moved away, returning only at Christmas to drink in the past at a succession of imaginatively named pubs.

Our family is no exception. So, Sarah, Penny, Jo and Kate - Christmas Eve, as usual at the Channel Burner?



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Chinchilla killer

John Walsh meets... PJ Proby



Grizzled as Grendel's Mother and just as legendary, PJ Proby sits at the table of a Soho restaurant, the picture of docility. After "50 years of firing Jack Daniels" down his golden throat, he is drinking grapefruit juice before him is the script of Pete Townshend's newly-disinterred *Quadrophobia*, which is shortly to go on the road with Proby playing the Godfather, filling in for Gary Glitter. From certain angles he is the dead spit of Dennis Hopper, his face lined and handsome and faintly menacing. And on two fingers of his left hand, two gold rings spell out a potent metaphor: one offers the letters "PJP", the other "ROBY". A split name, to go with the split personality, the split career... and, of course, the most famously disastrous, split trousers in stage history.

Younger readers should know that, in the early Sixties, when our hearts were young and lithe, Proby was an authentic Wild One. A glossy American import with a voice full of gulps, hiccups and stifled sobs, he sang like a man torn between acute melancholy and chronic indignation: "There's a place for us", the first line of "Somewhere", from the Sound of Music, emerged from Proby's emotion-drenched assault as "They're uh perlice faw uff", even its title virtually unrecognisable: "Summ-ah-wayah upper-lace...". In those days, he wore his hair in a girly pigtail with a velvet bow, and pouted about in a way no English eyes had seen before. "I was all over that stage," he reminisces, reckless of modesty. "Right in those little girls' faces. Nobody had ever boogied like James Brown, and moved their body like that before."

For most of his 58 years, Mr Proby has been in trouble - seeking it, courting it, revelling in it. But even he wasn't prepared for the reaction to the night of 29 January, 1965, at the Castle Hall, Croydon, when his blue velvet trousers split onstage from knee to crotch and splunged him towards Palookaville. An alderman's wife who attended the concert said the act "left me physically sick and should be banned". The trouble might have been invisibly incited, but two nights later, at the Ritz in Luton, Proby's unfeasibly tight strides bifurcated once again during a Fate-tempting leg-split, and the curtain came down on his

career. He was taken off the tour (to be replaced by Tom Jones), banned from further theatrical performances and from both TV channels. He was, suddenly, nowhere - and by and large remained there.

Today, the fuss seems a bit extreme. What was behind it? Had he actually exposed himself, like Jim Morrison? "Hell no, it was only mah knees showing. But it was political. Everyone was still coming down off that thing with Profumo and Keeler, there was an atmosphere about, and I was handing them some more of that. It was a big sexual thing and they were like, 'Get him out, he's causin' trouble like Christine Keeler...' Mary Whitehouse said, 'Get him out of the country', even before the trousers split, and they were waiting for a pretext."

The conspiracy theory is a little whimsical now, but Proby trots it out with gusto. In fact he does everything with gusto: sings, drinks, boasts, courts underage girls, shoots people, falls over, tells tall stories, spits out redneck bigotry and has comebacks. His newest comeback is a record entitled, inevitably, *Legend*, and featuring a duet with Marc Almond to the operatically lush "Yesterday Has Gone", a big hit for Cupid. Inspiration in 1968, Almond resurrected Gene Pitney's career in 1989 with a duet of "Something's Gotten Hold of My Heart", and Proby is hoping for a similar result. For the moment, though, things are a little sticky in the credit-sharing department. Proby is not happy that, in a film clip of the duet, Almond has somehow called the last note, as well as the first - and, unlike Proby, is not even under contract to the record company. Did they get on? Proby muses on his relationship with the famed English drama queen. "You ever see a picture called *Red River*? John Wayne and Montgomery Clift? That's us. Monty was a screaming fag, supposed to be in love with Elizabeth Taylor but couldn't bring himself to touch a woman..." I note that there is a new song on the album called "Devil in Red Velvet", on which Proby sings the line, "I'm the killer in chinchilla". Is the macho roustabout getting a bit camp himself? "Yeah, I know. I almost didn't do that. But even a hard-assed military man like me can't deny homosexuals exist. As long as I don't have to participate, I'm the gorilla in chinchilla."

He was born James Marcus

Smith in Houston, Texas, in 1948 and was singing when barely out of oopies. "You know them little recording booths? There's a record of me, at three, singin' 'Roll out the Barrel' for mah parents." (He goes into excruciating baby-speak. "Woll out the bawwel / We'll have a bawwel o'fun - can ah have some chew-gum now, Uocle Dan?") Raised an Episcopalian, he sang with gospel choirs at the local black church, like Jerry Lee Lewis. "I was the only white person there. And in the house o'God there is no prejudice. You don't kick people out for being white or black. Mind you, they might kick you out o' the bar oest door..." His mother took up with the local doctor ("a nice guy, but he couldn't handle alcohol. He was

periods in Hollywood, where the showbiz demon in his psyche struggled for mastery over the grunt, and won. He hung out with Elvis (who dated his sister), with Eddie Cochran (whose fiancée Sharon Sheedy gave him his stage name - PJ stands for "Papa James") and with Paul Newman, for whom he was chauffeur and bodyguard. "My job in the daytime was driving his two-seater Thunderbird. We went to the gym every day, we pumped iron and pulled birds all day."

Don't you love that "pulled birds"? Proby has of course lived in England, picking up such baroque, un-American formulations, since 1962, when he was brought over by Jack Good, the most powerful impresario in London, to take part

Theo came the split-velvets affair and soon he had nothing. By 1968 he was declared bankrupt with debts of £84,309, against useable assets of 59d. He lost all his possessions and took to drink. It's said that he blew £5m in two years, though you have to balance such claims with Proby's other Munichhausen-ish boasts: that he invented the male ponytail, that he brought in the Sixties fashion for bell-bottoms (from the naval academy, you see), that he once shared a cell with four condemned murderers, that he possesses the greatest singing voice in the world...

His decline was spectacular. He disappeared into the wilds of northern England, doing crap jobs, eking out a living. He was a shepherd in

the stage during his first number. More successful was his appearance in *Only the Lonely*, the Roy Orbison nostalgia show in which his 15-minute slot singing his old hits stopped the show night after night. But the last time he was in the papers, it was for claiming benefit earlier this year, while appearing on stage in Ritz Portsmouth and glamorous Brentwood.

His relations with women have been, shall we say, problematic over the years. His first wife Marianne was 14; they split up because he refused to take her out anywhere and "I caught her with a couple of guys". He was engaged to Dean Martin's daughter but, when they were temporarily estranged, he broke into her house and fired a Colt .45 at her and a gentleman friend and was imprisoned for three months. A similar fate awaited his third wife, a Manchester croupier called Dulcie, whom he shot with an air pistol, again for suspected infidelity. He was fined £60 for attacking his live-in secretary, allegedly because she was spending too much on groceries. In the early Eighties, the police took an interest in his relationship with a 14-year-old Yorkshire farmer's daughter, whom he married when she was a grand dame of 17; she left to collect some hamburgers a year later and never returned. More recently, he was shackled up in a north Finchley semi with the singer Billie Davies, who told *The People* that he had had only ooc erection in their time together and had spent three hours admiring it ("I didn't get a look in," she complained).

None of this unpromising record dents his romantic, if unrecanted, view of women. He regrets the onset of feminist frankness because "there's no reason to take a girl out anymore. You know you're going to get fucked, so you don't think about flowers and being a gentleman. Males doo' know how to show respect now, because females haven't demanded it in so many years. I doo' think there has been a role model in moralistic fibre in this country since the Sixties when we started ripping it apart." He is a keeo fan of virginity. "It's the highest thing a woman can give a man. She's nothing else to give. What else is there? Intelligence? We don't need her brain. We need her love, to make us get up and go out to

work." Sticking my neck out, I'd say Proby is perhaps not an ideal mate for female readers of this newspaper, with his belief that "men are put here to raise girls. Teach them to be women. Teach them to be ladies. Anything their parents left out..." Could't women teach him a thing or two? He looked appalled. "What could a woman teach a man?" How to be civilised? He looked more appalled. "Can they teach me about cleanliness? There are women around now, don't even know what a douche-hag is..."

Mr Proby, of course, grew up in one of the most chauvinistic parts of the world, and cannot help being a sexist racist, homophobic, casually authoritarian bigot. His dilutions on "coons" (his family had black servants) makes Enoch Powell, of whom PJ is a fan, sound like Alice Walker. His fascination for guns is more reasonably argued - "If those people in Tasmania, where that maniac walked into that café, had had guns, they'd be alive today and he wouldn't be facing a court, he'd be dead" - and he snorts with contempt about the British government's recent handgun ban. "Stupid," he says. "It's only going to put all that on the black market, running undercover, and make it even bigger."

Against the day when somebody does take a potshot at him, he has done several things. He's chosen a tombstone in Houston, and even chosen the plot who will fly his remains home. He has completed his autobiography but, typically, fallen out with his ghost writer. "She wanted it to be too sensationalist. Every other word was 'Fuck this', 'Fuck that', the way I spoke on the tape. I wanted my life story to read like *The Moon's a Balloon* by David Niven..." And of course he's releasing his self-defining *Legend* album, Amazingly, the doomed, self-destructive, chronically abandoned, incorrigibly alcoholic, redneck wastrel that Mr Proby has been for most of his life is weirdly contented about it all. He is unafraid of death ("All it means is going to meet mah best friend God - and all mah other friends are up there, too") and smug about having "an upsurge in your career at 58 years old, when every single person I know is retired - Elton, Tom [Jones], all of 'em". Feeling ridiculous, I asked the unluckiest man in rock history: do you feel lucky? "As lucky as blessed will let you get," he said. And guess what? He meant it.

"Two nights later, at the Ritz in Luton, Proby's unfeasibly tight strides bifurcated again during a Fate-tempting leg-split, and the curtain came down on his career"

always falling overboard into the Gulf of Mexico" and his parents separated. They were so stridently dysfunctional that the court was unable to award custody of nine-year-old James to either. He was sent instead to military academy, by some way the strongest influence on his life, though he admits it made him virtually impossible. "I had a gaog called the Great White Fathers, and I bought them motor-cycle jackets with eagles flying over coops' heads, pulling their hats off and dripping blood on them. I went to St Louis, Missouri and bought switchblades for the gang. It was the 11th graders - that's us, maybe 14 or 15 - against seniors, and we used to cut them up..."

Then came five years in Vietnam, as a regular army private, interspersed with rest 'n' recuperation

to a Beatles spectacular. Proby raided the Warner Brothers costume department to kit himself out for the flight to Heathrow. "The shirt was from *The Left-Handed Gun*, the Paul Newman movie about Billy the Kid, the boots were from *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, old leather ones with dancing soles..." Within weeks of touching down, he and Good recorded a version of the old Dick Haynes oom-ber, "Hold Me". In May, 1964, it went straight to No 3 in the charts, the first of a string of hits. For a couple of years, Proby was the It Boy. He had, he claims, unpeteo Rolls-Royces, Lear jets, a yacht and an expensive clothes habit to maintain, a mews house in Knightsbridge, then a house in Chelsea, across the King's Road from the Duke of Wellington's barracks.

Bolton, a muckspreader in Huddersfield ("that's about as close to Texas as you can get"), a janitor in Hammersmith, where once he'd filled the Palais. "I was sweeping the streets, the gutters, taking care of the occupants of a mansion hlock. I've slept in people's coal cellars because I had no place to live." he remembers without rancour. "I didn't care what I did. But I wouldn't go back on stage unless the money was right. To get me to do what I do best, it's got to be paid for. I wouldn't go on stage for less than £3,000. But to get me to clean your yard would cost you almost nothing." His occasional returns to the stage have been fraught. He was kicked out of *Ebbs: the Musical* in 1978 for messing with the script. In 1985, at the Rock 'n' Roll Legends concert in Epping Forest, he fell off

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Throughout the civil war in Lebanon, Caracalla kept the spirit of the dance alive. But can Beirut's current cultural revival survive the rebirth of Muslim fundamentalism? By Michael Church

Giant steps



From the ashes: Caracalla Dance Theatre's production of 'Elissa' (above); Christine Zaarour and George Khawand, two of the dancers, among the ruins (below)

The new Beirut now arising from the rubble is a forest of neon promising a brighter and better tomorrow. With food, fashion, and the delights of suburbia; comfortable homes and contented kids. Assad may beam down from every wall, and Syrian guns command every street, but the home-grown signs suggest a nation looking actively to its future. *Mission: Impossible* is showing, but it's too soon for showbiz glitz. There's just one gaudy ad to be seen by the approach-roads to the city, proclaiming *Elissa: Queen of Carthage*, performed by the Caracalla Dance Theatre.

Their auditorium is packed the night I go, as it has been every night for the past 10 months. The show begins with an ancient, quizzical figure in a Sinbad robe opening a vast book out of which spills a troupe of dancers in splendid apparel. The tale they tell – in a combination of mime and Martha Graham – is of the original Dido, tragic daughter of the King of Tyre, who chose to immolate herself rather than marry without love. The show is rounded off with a cleverly choreographed explosion of folk-dance, which the audience cheer to the rafters. No metropolitan cynicism here: just volcanic energy, and burning conviction.

Thirty years ago, Abdel-Halim Car-

calla was Lebanon's champion pole-vaulter; during the country's 15-year civil war, he became its cultural champion. For, apart from the conflict's first year, during which he was paralysed with horror along with everyone else, he and his troupe never stopped performing. Like the Windmill girls in London's blitz, they literally dodged the bombs on their way to work.

"During the war," says Caracalla, "everyone was constantly on the move, looking for safety. So I decided we would be on the move, too, following wherever the audience was." And it was this mobility – plus a topical re-working of *Romeo and Juliet* – that made him a legend. "Playing in every sector, we constantly had to cross the battle lines. If we had to move from the Christian sector to the Muslim one, Christian soldiers would hand us over to their Muslim counterparts at the boundary. And they in turn would hand us on to the Druze militiamen. If that was our next stop. It was as though the hatreds of war were temporarily lifted for us. As though the people who were killing each other every day had said, 'Let's be OK to Caracalla. Let him survive.'"

But things weren't always so smooth, as Caracalla's son, Ivan – in the company from the age of six – recalls. In what turned out to be one of the opening salvos of the war, a car carrying him and his mother plus two other women was suddenly fired on: he got off with minor injuries but one of their passengers was paralysed, and the other killed. The company's longest-serving member is a highly strung dancer called François Rahmé whose route to his calling was paved with grief. It's not a story he enjoys telling – you have to drag it out of him – but this is the gist: he was obsessed from his infancy with Fonteyn and Nureyev, and took dancing lessons from one of his two older sisters; all three



were travelling together when their car was hit by gunfire – both girls were killed by the same bullet. He was 10, and didn't dance again until he was 16. "The war," he says simply, "was awful. No fun at all." Tania Haroun – the current show's Dido – went to study in Paris when war broke out, and never intended to work in a battlefield. "I was back home visiting my parents in 1983, and went to a Caracalla show purely out of curiosity. And I couldn't believe that Beirut could produce anything so good, so professional. I took classes with them, and stayed. I found that dance was an escape from all the bad things of war. When you are on stage you always feel good, no matter what is bothering you in real life."

On the other hand, the quizzical gent

in the Sinbad robe confounds all expectation. Bert Stimmel is a tiny, sprightly 76-year-old who hails from Ohio, had a gilded career as a West End choreographer in the Fifties, and has worked with Caracalla for 30 years. His Beirut flat was blown to hell in the war, but his only comment is a gentle shrug. "I flew in the Second World War and my B-17 crashed in the North Sea, so I've no problem with danger here." This figure in Caracalla's Phoenician frieze speaks with a dreamy Southern courtesy; disparate worlds were never more strangely linked.

Listening to these dancers talk, and watching them in class with the maestro, one is struck by the awe in which they hold him. Whatever one thinks of his work –

and it doesn't please all tastes – Caracalla is that genuine article, a truly charismatic visionary. He acquired his vision – following a noble tradition – in the Roman temples at his home town of Baalbek. "I was watching the world's great companies come to perform at the annual festival, and I suddenly thought – why doesn't Lebanon have its own dance theatre? So I went to study in London, to reveal the dream."

"London" meant the Martha Graham-based London School of Contemporary Dance, and he's kept faith with its aesthetic ever since. His grand aim was to create a fusion of occidental and oriental styles, and thus to give the Arab world a new form. He trawled the Middle East with his camera and recorder, storing his finds in an archive which he will "at the right time" – donate to the Lebanese government. "It will be the past speaking to the future." He's set up a school for young dancers, from which his company is drawn.

One of his resident composers is a valuable polymath called Walid Gholmieh, who is president of the Beirut conservatoire. Gholmieh's current crusade is to persuade the state to fund a symphony orchestra. "But each time I win the argument, something happens to prevent it – a war on the southern border, or the Israeli shelling Beirut." The orchestra, he says, will be primarily devoted to the performance of Lebanese music. But how much indigenous symphonic music is there? "Not much yet," he agrees, "but once we have an orchestra, it will come. We have the composers already – the problem is that they are in the States or in Europe. We want them back."

When he took over the conservatoire in 1991, it was in very bad shape, with its buildings looted and burned, and 56 professors teaching a mere 48 students. Now

215 professors teach 3,500 students, and he proudly reels off their specialisms: 700 pianists, 350 violinists, 40 cellists, 300 woodwind, 300 opera singers, 500 oriental-music singers...

Wonderful, but what opportunities await them? His face falls. "Your question is quite... delicate. Music in the Arab world is not easy these days. The Islamic conception of music is not favourable to it as a career." He is too diplomatic to say it, but the truth is that even in Lebanon, music is being systematically snuffed out by Muslim fundamentalism. A Beirut television programme for spotting musical talent cruelly reflects the situation: 10 years ago, 60 per cent of the entrants were Muslim, now the figure is five per cent.

Local enthusiasts long to reinstitute the Baalbek festival, but "political interests" regularly foil their attempts. And you only have to sniff the air in the streets to understand why: this Hezbollah stronghold in the Bekaa valley excludes the same duar severity to be found in the Hezbollah area of Beirut. Opera queens – and concert pianists – would just not fit the picture. The old Baalbek, as one conductor said, said to me, is dead.

Yet, in other places, the cultural scene is humming. Beirut does not yet have a proper hall, but events take place in a wide variety of improvised venues, often at the instigation of the foreign centres conspiring to help Lebanon recover. Next month, the British Council will open a second office in Beirut: it had planned two excellent contributions to the cultural feast this year, but both had to be cancelled because of the Israeli attack. That peace process had better get moving again, fast.

Caracalla Dance Company perform 'Elissa: Queen of Carthage' 12-16 Nov; Peacock Theatre, London WC2. Booking: 0171-304 8800

Swanning along to the rescue

Next time Sylvie Guillem asks 'Romeo, Romeo? wherefore art thou, Romeo?' Adam Cooper just might be the answer. By Louise Levene

Ticket touts were out in force at the Royal Opera House on Tuesday. There wasn't a seat to be had for *Romeo and Juliet* and indeed 50 people were happily managing without, willing to stand for three hours watching Sylvie Guillem. The additional treat they could not have anticipated was the last-minute withdrawal of her usual partner Jonathan Cope, who had unfortunately cracked a rib. He was replaced by Adam Cooper, the Royal Ballet dancer currently starring (and I do mean starring) two nights a week in the West End run of *Adventures in Motion Pictures* huge hit, *Swan Lake*.

Since the acrimonious departure of the tall and pointedly good-looking Hungarian Zoltan Solymosi, Dorey Bussell and Guillem have been forced into a risky time-share with Jonathan Cope. Very tall, very handsome and very reliable, the only fear was that the strain would prove too much for him. In the event, it wasn't a dance injury but fate at the wheel of a car that laid him

low. Although Cooper has squirmed Guillem in one-act works, he has never been given a crack at a full-length dramatic partnership. This was his big chance to prove to the beady eyes of management (and the even beady eyes of Mlle Guillem) that he was more than equal to the task.

Cooper has danced *Romeo* before, but he wasn't scheduled to do so this season and the lack of rehearsal time showed in some of his early solos. He had wisely decided to cut his losses and spend the few precious days available working on the all-important pas de deux.

Juliet has grown into one of Guillem's strongest London roles. Far too many ballerinas dance the character as if Juliet herself had read the play and imbued their reading with a sort of Casandra-like gloom that takes the sting out of the tragedy. Guillem's Juliet positively quivers with happiness and this blissful innocence of her waiting fate makes the ending almost unbearable. The strength and lightness



Sylvie Guillem as Juliet

of her dancing, and the coltish charm of her acting, make her irresistible. Adam Cooper didn't even try to resist. Guillem is reputed to treat rehearsals as a matter of stringent technical preparation, reserving her dramatic energies for performance. If this was the case with Cooper, then the explosive chemistry of their partnership will have surprised him as much as it delighted the audience. The bedroom scene was danced with utter conviction and they threw themselves into MacMillan's fenderish pairwork with a naturalistic hunger. Whether or not Bussell and Guillem continue to dance exclusively with Jonathan Cope remains to be seen. Tuesday night's performance demonstrated that there is no longer any necessity for this.

Cope wasn't the only absentee at Covent Garden this week. Thursday's revival of MacMillan's 1989 ballet *The Prince of the Pagodas* was drawn almost entirely from the sub bench. Ashley Page, Tetsuya Kumakawa and Deborah Bull were all absent

and the resulting changes left the company in disarray. One hesitates to name names but, since you twist my arm: one dancer made such a lumpy dog's breakfast of the King of the North's first big solo that the normally over-polite first-night audience seemed collectively to sit on its hands. He improved as he went on but he couldn't fail to really – and he wasn't even replacing anybody.

At the centre of this storm of uncertainty and inadequacy shone Dorey Bussell, reprising the role of the exiled princess that made her a star at 20. Seven years haven't diminished her dancing jets and enduringly girlish beauty, and have only served to strengthen her technique and assurance. Her performance was a reproach to the dancing of many of her colleagues. Stuart Cassidy was her Prince turned Green Salamander and he danced the latter particularly well, darting lizard-like from pose to pose and curling his arms and spine to Benjamin Britten's exotic faux-gamelan sound. There wasn't much chemistry between them but that is hardly surprising in a manufactured cod-Freudian fairy tale like this. People complain that classical ballet princes are two-dimensional but Florindor is a positive Hamlet by comparison.

Bussell's dancing, Nicholas Georgiadis's stylised design, and the orchestra's relish of Britten's score remain the ballet's real pleasures. The touts won't be wasting their time on this one. In rep to 28 Nov, ROH, Covent Garden, London WC2 (0171-304 4000)

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The F-word that became respectable

Larger women launch campaign to emphasise positive image and show that big really is beautiful

Clare Garner

Move over Kate Moss — big is beautiful. An exhibition of positive images of fat women, designed to knock the skinny models off the cover of *Vogue* in favour of the fuller female figure, opens today.

The event, which could be seen as a kind of Rubens revival, has been organised by the Fat Women's Group. Their celebration of fatness includes pictures, prints, videos and artefacts from around the world demonstrates, they say, "the beauty and reality of larger sizes".

"You only have to look at how many lovely representations of fat women we have managed to gather together to see that beauty and thinness do not necessarily go together," said Janet Mearns, a member of the Fat Women's Group, which was founded eight years ago.

Today, the group will also be handing out awards to fat women who have "taken a risk to promote size acceptance." Among the award winners is Helen Jackson, a barrister who campaigns to end size discrimination; Sue Surry, who promotes Big Aerobics; and Laurie Toby Edison and Debbie Notkin for their book, *Women En Large*, which "tells the stories of real life fashions in words and photos".

Miss Jackson, who practices in Birmingham, says she has come across cases of ten and a half stone women being turned down for jobs on account of their size. It is a situation she is desperate to change. "I want to make discrimination against fat people as unacceptable as discrimination against gay people."

Successful fat women do exist. Larger-than-life characters such as Vanessa Feltz, the chat show host, and the comedienne Jo Brand and Dawn French make for good role

models. And recently Jennifer Paterson, a freelance cook and *Spectator* columnist, and Clarissa Dickson Wright, a former barrister turned Edinburgh cookery bookshop owner, burst onto our screens with their weekly BBC2 cooking show, *Two Fat Ladies*.

But more often than not, women succeed in spite of their size. And according to Miss Jackson, society is becoming increasingly biased against overweight women. "It's far more widespread than we realise," she said. "People who ten years ago wouldn't have been told they were fat are now being discriminated against." She has problems persuading anyone to take up their case in the courts. "One of the problems is that many people think it's a matter of shame to be excluded on account of one's weight."

Ali Farrelly, 30, a fat women's fashion stylist and member of the Fat Women's Group, is also exhibiting her work today. In her crusade against "body fascism", Ms Farrelly plans to reshoot classic advertisements such as the Calvin Klein photograph of Kate Moss lying naked using women double her size, but she is worried about copyright. "If I use the name *Vogue* with a size 20 model, they are going to sue the pants off me. I'll have to say it's an 'art project'. I'm sure Andy Warhol didn't get sued by Campbell's."

"I want to use bigger women. Normal women. I want to have women who've got freckles, women who've got stretch marks, a mole on their stomach or an operation scar. All those things, people feel they've got to cover up."

But Ms Farrelly, who weighs 15 and a half stone, is having difficulty finding volunteers. "I am the only one modelling so far. I think people think I'm a big exhibitionist, but it's not like that."



Weighty images: Vanessa Feltz, the chat-show host and (above, right) Beryl Cook's painting *Song and Dance* and (bottom, right) a detail from a 1735 work by Charles-Joseph Natoire

Hefty folk weigh in with a bigger say

Jojo Moyes

While in New York and California slim and body-conscious are the watchwords, the proportion of America for which fat is the norm is ever wider. In 1981, 25 per cent were obese; the North American Association for the Study of Obesity recently heard that, under a new method of gauging fitness, 59 per cent of men and 49 per cent of women fell into the fat category.

On present trends, 75 per cent of Americans will be obese by 2050; Baylor College of Medicine, Texas, says by 2020 they will all be obese.

The National Centre for Health Statistics says television "zappers" may have helped create the problem and suggests advice on television about diet and exercise is no match for the huge, fatty helpings served in the country's restaurants. This has a penalty: the direct and indirect costs of obesity total nearly 10 per cent of sick-care costs in the West.

There is evidence the fat are still discriminated against. Research by Duke University says a businessman will earn \$1,000 (£660) a year less for every one pound he is overweight.

But the growing strength of the "fat" voice has meant a burgeoning of support groups. Many ask whether thin is better. The fat-acceptance movement advises on "fuller-figure outfits", which airlines are "big-friendly" and even which cinemas allow you to watch from your own specially imported chair.

The US National Association for the Advancement of Fat Acceptance recently demanded changes to the Eddie Murphy film *The Nutty Professor*, saying the portrayal of the 30-stone teacher was demeaning to fat people. Their complaints were based on the script: "We haven't seen the movie," said a spokesman. "The theatres have no seats big enough."

As large as life...

They say that inside every fat person there's a thin person waiting to get out; that's because we've just eaten him.

Jo Brand
The critics say I'm so fat that I fill the screen and there's no room for guests.

Vanessa Feltz
There's something more alluring... about our full and splendid bodies that shouldn't be ignored.

Dawn French
She fitted into my largest armchair as if it had been built round her by someone who knew they were wearing armchairs tight round the hips this season.

PG Wodehouse, *Jeeves and the Unbidden Guest*



Second pay-per-view bout in British television exceeds expectations

Tyson-Holyfield fight set to land BSkyB £5m

Mathew Horsman
Media Editor

More than 250,000 people have already agreed to pay £9.95 each for the right to watch the televised WBA heavyweight championship boxing match tonight on Sky television between titleholder Mike Tyson and Evander Holyfield in Las Vegas.

The pay-per-view bout, the second in British television history, could attract 500,000 viewers by the time the event begins at midnight.

That is still less than the 660,000 who paid to see Tyson fight British hero Frank Bruno earlier this year, when pay-per-view was launched.

But sources at BSkyB, Rupert Murdoch's satellite broadcaster, and at cable operators around the country, said the take-up levels were much bet-

ter than anticipated. "We expected far less interest without a British fighter in the match," said one cable executive.

Industry sources said last night the results proved the viability of pay-per-view television. Many critics had suggested viewers would be unwilling to pay more than their basic subscription for pay-TV events.

Sky viewers already spend as much as £26.99 a month to get 40 channels, including premium sport and movies, with cable subscribers paying even more.

Subscribers to Sky's sport channels will be able to see Prince Naseem battle Remigio Molina, of Argentina, for the world featherweight championship, starting tonight at 9:20pm.

The Steve Collins-Nigel Benn fight and the Easley Bingham-Ronald Wright battle

will follow. The British bouts will be "free" to those who already receive the Sky premium channels.

Thereafter, screens will go blank for those who have not paid their pay-per-view fee, although BSkyB said last night that orders will be taken at the premium price of £14.95 even after the US fight begins.

Cable companies are also carrying the pay-per-view event, with viewers asked to ring a special number to arrange for the signal to be unscrambled. Subscribers in most franchises owned by Nynex CableComms will be able to order the event using their remote controls, through new technology in use for the first time in the UK.

Both Sky and cable operators expect impulse buying to push take-up rates higher in the course of today. On estimates

of 500,000, not counting viewers in pubs and theatres, BSkyB stands to earn about £5m from the event.

According to industry insiders, pay-per-view is expected to be the fastest growing market for pay-TV, currently worth about £1bn.

In the US, the market has posted disappointing growth rates. However, industry leaders in the UK say the products on offer have been priced too high — in some cases double the £10 or so set here.

Next year, BSkyB intends to launch a digital service, with as many as 60 channels dedicated to pay-per-view.

Both sport and movies are expected to form part of the package, with prices for movies set at about £2-£3 per view, about the price of a hired video.

Boxing preview, page 26



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can Tony woo the
female voter? Find out in
our exclusive poll

سكرا من الامل

Spectacularly deserted

Annie Caulfield in eastern Jordan

"You see Petra? Wadi Rum? Aqaba? Kids trying out their English always ask you this in Jordan. And of course you want to see Petra, Wadi Rum, Aqaba - the north to south line that's the route through the country's most famous treasures. But there is the other bit of Jordan that sticks out to the East. It looks near empty on the map, so stark there's even a town that's just a map reference, H5.

The Eastern Desert is full of Bedouin who aren't as tourist-sharp as those down south, and they pursue their traditions with little more than a nod of friendly curiosity to the outside world. Then there are the miles of desert. Not beautiful, colourful and piled with spectacular giant rock formations like the famed Wadi Rum. This is the sort of desert people stagger about in going mad - endlessly the same bleak, fawn scrub.

A hire car is the best way out here. On the road from Amman to Azraq, you pass a string of intriguing desert complexes. First is Qasr Kharrana, the only desert castle that would seem to have been built for purely defensive purposes. Others, like Tuba, Mushatta and particularly Qasr al Amra are places that tell you a lot more about the Omayyad dynasty lifestyle.

The Omayyads came from the deserts around the 8th century, battled the Byzantines out of power and made themselves an empire in the region, with Damascus as their capital. The remote castles were places of retreat from their own civilisation, to ensure their desert ways weren't lost. Horses were raced, game was hunted with falcon, saluki dogs and trained cheetahs. They were also havens of off-duty fun - with music, dancing girls and luxury bathing facilities. The walls and ceilings of Qasr al Amra leap with colourful frescoes of hunting scenes, birds, flowers and very unveiled ladies. There are pictures of conquered enemies and, for more relaxing thoughts, the inside of one of the domes is painted with a map of the heavens with stars in zodiacal constellations.

The round, yellow domes of Qasr al Amra melt into the sand surrounding them as you drive away. And the black basalt fort at Azraq glowers out, forbidding, a few miles down the road. Here, as at Qasr Habbat to the North, the

Omayyads took over a Roman fortification and did it up a bit with baths and a mosque. They used it as a military headquarters and also as a hunting lodge.

Until very recently, this area was green and almost swampy; game was plentiful. The underground water has been pumped away to Amman, helping the city greatly but ridding Azraq of flocks of migrating birds and indigenous wild animals. There's a nature reserve with ostrich and ibex, but it's no longer the sumptuous oasis Lawrence of Arabia found when he made Azraq his headquarters in 1917.

The very old guard at the fort will show you pictures of his father with Lawrence and the grim black stone room above the gatehouse where Lawrence slept. The massive stone doors and the great boulders of the walls must have looked reassuringly secure to anyone who operated out of Azraq in troubled times. These days, without revolts to run or quell, the Azraq Resthouse down the road is a more comfortable place to stay. Little terraced cabins are grouped round an outdoor pool and a bar, disconcertingly well stocked with sticky Americans - F16 crews who are based here while protecting Saudi Arabia. Even this isn't as expensive as the big flash new hotel just on the edge of Azraq town. Are they getting that many post visitors to the fort they need this white-washed extravaganza out here in the middle of nowhere? And what is it that's somehow very odd about Azraq town?

Actually it's two towns. Turn left at the crossroads and you're in a quiet town of polite but taciturn people - Druze who fled from Syria decades ago. Conservative, religious, secretive - they quietly keep shops, farm and go to bed early. The right-hand town is scruffy and heaving with life and neon, like a cheap seaside resort. But the cars are wrong - new, flashy - Cadillacs, Mercedes, a Daimler.

Right-hand Azraq is full of Saudis - but they don't live there. Right-hand Azraq is also a Chechen town, settled by refugees the last time the Russians took against these people. The Chechens have got a fine trade in alcohol going for themselves now. Thirty miles from the Saudi border, every little restaurant has a back-room drinking parlour, every little shop has an under the counter off-licence. The posh hotel wasn't built for tourists, it was built to accommodate all the Saudis fleeing across the desert for a night of fun.

From Azraq, there's a loop road back to Amman that takes in more desert forts and Omayyad fun palaces; or you could drive straight on through desert wastes, see the palaeolithic archaeology sites and get as close as you're likely to get to Iraq without an F16. Or you could go right towards Saudi Arabia and the spectacular view of the desert available from a high watchtower in the nature reserve. Careful on this road: the flash car drivers might not be seeing straight.

Getting there: Direct flights are available to Queen Alia airport, about 40 minutes drive south of Amman, with both British Airways (0345 222111) and Royal Jordanian (0171-734 2557), £340 and £350 respectively (inc tax). Cheaper flights through discount agents: Trailfinders (0171-938 3366) on Olympic Airways via Athens for £252, or on Cyprus Airways via Larnaca for £279 through Jetline (0171-360 1111).

Getting around: It is cheaper to book car-hire before you go. Avis (0990 900500), Hertz (0990 996699) and Budget (0800 181181) have offices in Amman. The cheapest deal is from Avis, with a Daihatsu Charade for £181 per week inclusive of unlimited mileage and collision damage waiver. You don't need an international drivers' permit to rent, but it is handy to have one if you are stopped by police.

Red Tape: Visas to Jordan are essential for British nationals (cost: £27) and are available from the Jordanian Embassy, 6 Upper Phillimore Gardens, London W8, in person or by post. Call the information line 0891 171261 for further details.

When to go: Spring is generally the best time. Amman has cold winters and hot, dry summers.

Philippa Czernia



The Eastern Desert is full of Bedouin who aren't as tourist-sharp as those in the south PHOTOGRAPH: CHRIS CALDICOTT

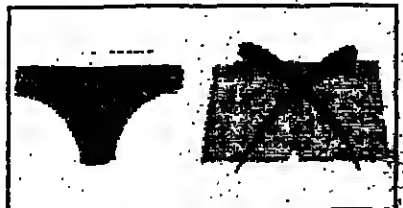


Simon Calder

The curious question of French swimwear

This column has no intention of turning into men's fashion corner, but I must bring you an update on male swimwear in France. You may recall a fortnight ago that the *Independent* photographer Brian Harris met his waterborne Waterloo at a camp site swimming pool in France, where he and his son were ejected for wearing baggy (and hyper-trendy) swimwear. They were transgressing an arcane French law which insists on regular figure-hugging trunks. Yet the company he travelled with, Eurocamp, says the regulations are not so obscure after all. On page 27 of its *Traveller's Guide to France*, *Organised Activities*, is a paragraph about the loi.

Water purity regulations insist that camp sites forbid the wearing of shorts-style swimming trunks (only "brief" style trunks are allowed). The illustration (below) makes the point succinctly:



Pity the poor traveller arriving by Eurostar at Waterloo, and hoping to continue the journey by Tube. Anyone who wants to reach the rail termini of Paddington or Marylebone, or pop along to Piccadilly or Oxford Circus for shopping or sightseeing, faces big problems for the next eight months. From midnight tonight, no trains will run on the Bakerloo Line south of Piccadilly Circus because of engineering works. Dismal news for the capital's commuters. But for travellers unfamiliar with London's transport, it promises to be truly bewildering.

Suppose you want to reach Oxford Circus. The Underground offers several suggestions. First, take an ordinary train back down the railway to Vauxhall and change to the Victoria Line - an obstacle course unsuitable for anyone carrying more than a briefcase. Better catch the "Bakerloo bus" that is replacing the Tube. The problem here is that first you have to find your way to the Underground hocking hall and buy a ticket, then return above ground and locate the bus. If instead you find, say, the 176 bus stop and spot a regular bus to Oxford Circus, you must either throw away your newly acquired ticket and buy another one - or risk a £5 fine.

Seven years ago this morning, the Berlin Wall fell: and 24 hours after I met the unfortunate winner of the competition to celebrate 10 years of the *Independent Traveller*.

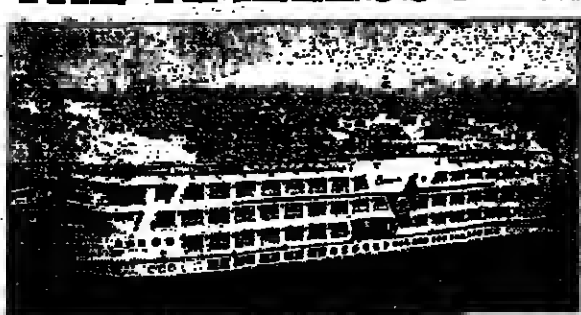
The prize, to use the term loosely, is a trip to East Berlin by independent and economic means, ie mostly hitch-hiking. But even before our planned journey to Berlin began, things went badly wrong. On Wednesday morning I went to the German tourist board in London, only to find that the office does not open until an unGermanic 12 noon. The maps that were promised had not arrived by the time I left, clutching only 1976 autobahn map.

The trip was to have begun with a rail/ship crossing as far as the German border. Sadly, when I tried to book the cheap £49 ticket all the seats were full. The next fare up was more expensive than flying - at least to Holland. So we began by flying from London City airport to Rotterdam. The winner, Alison Clements of Maidstone, bravely turned up at the airport despite a fear of flying. I also learned that she has never hitch-hiked before, even though we face a 400-mile hike across northern Europe.

Our reports on the ordeal - sorry, adventure - will appear next Saturday. I suspect that they may conflict.

Along the Nile we find a timeless quietude over which preside the ancient monuments of past millennia. The Nile is Egypt and Egypt is the Nile - thus ran the classical wisdom of Herodotus, and in taking a leisurely cruise in Upper Egypt and Aswan, on the northern edge of Lake Nasser, the traveller does more than just observe the life and relics of Egypt, but in choosing to travel along the Nile, is using one of the principal means of transportation for the area. The one aspect of cruising the Nile that has changed has been the quality of the vessels and we have been lucky to secure cabins on one of the finest currently in service - the MS Serenade. The modern and elegant features of the vessel, together with its musical theme, make it the most comfortable and relaxing way to see the glories of Egypt. The 58 passenger cabins, all with full facilities, feature custom-made furniture and picture windows with spectacular views of the Nile while the public rooms are decorated in neoclassical style.

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Cotton tales

The Roads family visits Quarry Bank Mill in Styal, Cheshire

Doctor Who's Tardis aside, a visit to Quarry Bank Mill, Styal, is the best method of travelling back in time. A stone's throw from Manchester Airport, the former cotton mill is now owned and managed by the National Trust and is one of the best preserved factory colonies in the world.

The man responsible for the complex was one Samuel Greg, born in Belfast in 1758. The company specialised in "putting-out", the practice of distributing raw materials to home-based cotton spinners, for later collection and sale. But Greg, along with other entrepreneurs of his time, wanted to produce the goods more efficiently and at greater profit to himself.

So, in 1784, convinced that the fast-flowing River Bollin would give him the water power that he needed, Greg started construction of a four-storey mill. A little later, he built an apprentice house for child labourers indentured from the workhouses, a mansion for his family, and made improvements and additions to the nearby agricultural village of Sneyth, to provide housing for his workers. The mill was later extended, not only by Samuel Greg, but also by his descendants, who continued making cotton until 1959.

The mill now houses an impressive museum where the story of the cotton industry is told via a series of hands-on displays, reconstructions and live demonstrations by attendants in period costume.



The story of cotton, and exploitation of children, is told through a series of displays and reconstructions Photograph: Janet Marsden

quarters, via a viewing platform in the wheel pit.

Barbara: I found myself homing in on all aspects of mill life as it would have affected the children. When you're standing next to the spinning mules in operation, you can see for yourself how dangerous the work must have been for the small children who used to follow the moving carriages, twisting together broken threads and crouching under the machines to clean them.

The deal

Quarry Bank Mill (01625 527468)
Location: Follow the signs from Junction 5 of the M56 or from Wilmslow town centre.
Winter opening times: 11am-5pm. Closed Mondays. Tours of Apprentice House are at half-hourly intervals and start at 11.30am
Entrance (mill and apprentice museum): adults, £4.50; concessions/children, £3.20; family ticket, £10 (2 adults, 2 children). Wheelchair users and one carer are admitted free of charge, as are National Trust members.

Access: There is limited access for wheelchair users - hence free admission. Free huggy park with back packs available to carry babies and toddlers.

Catering facilities: The Mill Kitchen has self-service meals, hot drinks, home-made cakes and salad bar. The Pantry offers drinks and sweets only.

Toilets: Centrally located. Facilities for disabled. Parent and baby room.
Education: The Education Resource Centre caters for school parties with tailor-made courses to suit requirements. Education packs are available, such as one on Victorian Britain at Key Stage 2, together with resources for older children, studying at GCSE level.

Forthcoming attractions: The Great Plum Pudding Mystery Trail: 7, 8 and 14, 15 December.

Janet Marsden

Are we nearly there?

Children's librarians

The London Film Festival previews Rauld Duhf's *Moths* today. The film is just the latest in a new wave of intelligent, children's movies on general release. They have good storylines and high production values, that leave *Lasse* in the shade. Watch out for the release next month of Hollywood's Christmas spectacular - *101 Dalmatians*, with Glenn Close as a gorgeously evil Cruella de Vil.

The Adventures of Pinocchio
(U)
This live-action version of C. Collodi's fairy tale has puppets from Jim Henson's Creature Shop and the latest post-Ty Story digital technology.

Alaska (PG): Charlton Heston plays a big game poacher in this Disney eco-thriller for a slightly older audience. Good teen performances, a cute polar bear cub and breathtaking snowscapes.

Dragonheart | PG-13: More computer-generated special effects in this tale of a medieval knight (Dennis Quaid) travelling the countryside with the world's last dragon. Dragon, voiced by Sean Connery.

A Goofy Movie: Mickey's gangling side-kick gets a movie all to himself in this full length musical cartoon which sees Goofy taking his offspring to the country for a spot of father-son bonding.

James and the Giant Peach | U
Joanna Lumley and Miriam
Margulies give splendid cameo
as James' spiteful aunts Sponge
and Spiker in this part-animated
film about an orphan and the
insects he befriends.

The Wind in the Willows (PG): Terry Jones' poorly received live-action version of the Kenneth Grahame classic, with a green-faced director as Toad.

Roald Dahl's Matilda (PG); Danny De Vito directed and stars in this knockabout screen adaptation of Dahl's book, which retains all the rude nastiness that children love so much. (1.30pm, 6.50pm Odeon West End, Leicester Square, London W1, today).

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One of the most picturesque stretches of the Northumbrian coast is that between the two fishing villages of Beadnell and Craster

PHOTOGRAPH: NEWSTEAM/MIKE SCOTT

A sheep on the beach

Matthew Brace walks the Northumbrian coast, from Beadnell to Craster

Northumbria has 65 miles of coastline, from the Scottish border at Berwick-upon-Tweed to Blyth. Almost this entire length of coast has been classed as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. One of the most picturesque stretches is that between the two fishing villages of Beadnell and Craster.

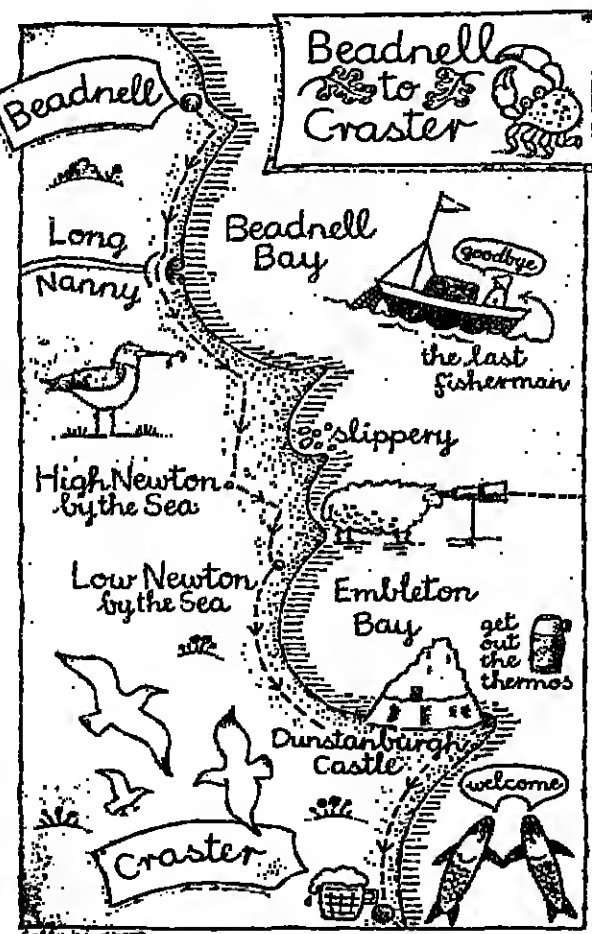
Leave your car in Craster to tumble into when you finish your walk, and let Northumbria Buses take you from the bus stop opposite the cottages by the pretty horseshoe harbour, up to Beadnell.

The 20-minute ride follows the road just inland, and gives you a glimpse of what to expect on the walk: a shimmering sea, wild winds and a vast sky.

Beadnell, with its west-facing harbour – caused by a rock spit curling around the headland – was once a thriving fishing village but has now lost almost all its trade. The last Beadnell fisherman, John Dixon, plans to retire this year.

Setting out on foot from the bus stop, follow the main road south through the village, along the sea wall, where even on a relatively calm day the waves can pound so hard they throw spray on to the road. The road bears right through a small estate of new houses and leads to a caravan park by the dunes.

Here you have three options: either to climb the dunes and walk along their ridge, which



• From Beadnell walk south towards caravan park through new housing estate. Go through caravan park and either veer left for the dunes or straight on through the bird sanctuary (following a fence for part of the way).

• If you take the beach, on reaching the stream that crosses the sands, turn inland 200 yards to footbridge. The sanctuary route leads you directly to the bridge.

• Cross the bridge and head across Newton Links dunes path to car park, then take the road to High Newton-by-the-Sea.

• At village green, turn left and follow road for about a mile to Low Newton-by-the-Sea and rejoin the beach.

• Follow shoreline for one-and-a-half miles, watch. • Where the sand gives way to slippery black rocks, head up through a gully in the dunes to the National Trust coastal path and turn left.

• Follow the path in Dunstanburgh, skirting round the base of the castle's rock pedestal and entering from the south side.

• From Dunstanburgh head south along the coast path to Craster, and welcome kippers. Total distance: about 8 miles

birds, or to leave the bracing sea blasts for later and stroll through the bird sanctuary behind the dunes. It is worth carrying an Ordnance Survey map in your rucksack, for the paths are not signposted here. All three routes bring you to a wooden bridge across Brunton Burn as it empties into the Bay at a narrow estuary called Long Nanny, half-way along the beach's crescent.

From the southern end of the bridge, follow a signposted path across Newton Links, a stretch of National Trust coastline, listening for the mournful cries of oystercatchers.

To knock some sand out of your shoes, on reaching the car park by Newton Links House take the road inland a little, to High Newton-by-the-Sea and then Low Newton-by-the-Sea, where you can rejoin the beach.

At low tide along this beach – Embleton Bay – you may well meet a local shepherd herding his sheep in a neat, tight flock along the beach, their hooves leaving a wake of churned sand behind them.

From the rocks known as Jenny Bells Carr, the daunting silhouetted ruins of Dunstanburgh Castle loom on the horizon. Dunstanburgh was built by Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, in 1313. After his execution for treason in 1322, it became a stronghold for English kings against the Scots. During the Wars of the Roses, it was a Lan-

castrian base, until the Yorkists captured it in 1462.

Enough remains of Dunstanburgh to make it worth stopping for a look, even if this is just an excuse to get out the tea flask and admire the view from the castle walls.

From there to Craster, the path hugs the stony coast, a flat stretch popular on weekends with strollers from the village out for an afternoon blow along the sea.

Close by Craster's harbour is an oak-smoked kipper plant, now in its 90th year. This marks journey's end. Conveniently situated across the road is The Jolly Fisherman, a friendly pub with arguably the best views of any bar in the country.

From the lounge bar you can gaze back along the wild sweep of coast you have just walked, or south in the rock of Longhoughton Steel. Gulls the size of small eagles wheel above the waves, and the rocks are covered with black cormorants drying their wings in the sun.

The landlord, Billy Silk, delivers in the table a pint of Thorne bitter, a bowl of crab soup (laced with cream and whisky) and a plate of kipper pâté, and everything seems right in the world.

Craster is signposted from the B1340 and B1339, off the A1. Northumbria Buses will take you to Beadnell (about £3 one way). Timetables from tourist office (0191-375 3000).

The day of the tree

Richard D North reports

The new contender for the role of the standard-bearer of British conservation is the ancient tree. Tell it not in Japan, where they are revered, and you see sprawling, creaking old things, wired and propped up, like elderly people with artificial hips and Zimmer frames. It is the careless Brits who, with less fuss, do ancient trees the best. But they could try harder.

On Monday, English Nature and other tree custodians launch the Veteran Tree Project in Windsor Great Park. Says Ted Green, a forester and a consultant to the park's geriatric oaks: "We've got 80 per cent of the old trees left in Europe." His next point explains our need to make a fuss. "The Germans have just published a book of their top 100 old trees. We haven't. Yet in parts of Britain you can see several hundred in a few hundred acres."

Old trees are a part of our history. Medieval cathedrals and our Navy gobbled up prodigious numbers. The daughters, sisters even, of the beams of Lincoln Cathedral are still growing in Sherwood Forest. Windsor has trees planted in the 16th century, and they are striplings compared with the old fellows which remain, which may have been saplings when their parents were cleared to make way for grazing.

Many of our oldest trees are with us because they have been worked hard all their lives. They are now suffering from idleness. Massive trunks, cropped for brushwood, have grown and grown, but the top-hammer was kept until quite recently within supportable bounds. Their survival may depend on brutal pruning.

Indeed, wherever you see a tree standing alone and sentinel – say, in a great park – you are almost certainly looking at an artificial beast. In natural woodland there are few really old trees: fire, storms and competition for light keep the forest young. Only being huddled together with its fellows makes a forest tree tall and straight. Lone trees are socially dysfunctional.

If a parkland tree is gnarled and short, it will have been cropped most of its life. If it is tall, it will have been pruned to produce a long trunk.

These thoughts rather prompt me to support the Duke of Edinburgh's line a couple of years ago. To howls of rage from the conservationists, he insisted that it was right to knock down an avenue of old oaks in Windsor Great Park. There were, after all, thousands of older, grander trees in the park; he wanted to lay down an avenue which would stand for several hundred years. And there's no semi-formal landscape without the clatter of the aristocrat and his chain-saw – Capability Brown and Repton knew that. Mr Green stresses that whatever people say about the Duke and the Great Park, Windsor is the trail-blazer in the matter of caring for old trees.

Charles Watkins, one of our best historians of nature, notes that our affection for old trees is prone to fashion. "It was Druidical mythology, then the phoney-medievalism of Robin Hood; now it's hags," he says: creatures such as the violet click beetle. The invertebrates that like rotting wood have a hard time in the rest of Europe, where aristocrats did not make (or get to keep) big parks, and tidy-mindedness (and war-torn peasants) swept away old woodland trees. Britain is a bastion for insect life that has survived in a tradition of decaying heartwood running back to the islands' pre-history. The way to safeguard their future is in cherishing our geriatric trees, whilst leaving as much dead wood around the countryside as possible.

For a free leaflet on the Veteran Trees Initiative write to English Nature, Northminster House, Peterborough PE1 1UA. See ancient trees in Windsor Great Park, Epping Forest (CL, Essex); Burnham Beeches (CL, Slough); Ashcad Common (CL, Surrey); Sherwood Forest (Visitor Centre, Edwinstowe, Notts: 01623 823202); Clumber Park (NT, Notts); Hatfield Forest (NT, Essex); Croft Castle (NT, Herefordshire); Calke Abbey (NT, Derbyshire); Attingham Park (NT, Nr Shrewsbury); Brockhampton Park (NT, Wilt); Herfordshire; Duncombe Park (NT, Yorks). *NT: National Trust. Call your regional office. *CL: Corporation of London (01753 647558).



Duff Hart-Davis
One must at all times resist the temptation to pick up individual leaves. That way madness lies

Leaves! At this time of the year they drive me crazy. From a distance, the autumn colour massed round the sides of our valley looks magnificent; but at close quarters its individual components carpet the lawn and choke the gutters with such persistence, week after week, that they become a menace to health and temper.

Leaves that land on our grass or in the yard make the place look like a tip. Those which settle on stone steps – being what British Rail no doubt would call the wrong sort – could easily break your leg by causing you to slip and fall. Similarly, the deposits in the one-in-four lane – already black and slimy – are treacherous personified, since they turn any car which tries to brake into a toboggan.

In recent weeks I have read many an earnest dissertation by gardening experts on the richness of leaf compost, and the need to make the most of the autumnal fall-out. Great! But has anyone measured the sheer tedium of collecting it up?

There are, I know, machines which will do the job. But usually I find myself driven back on that most primitive of implements, the rake. Last year my wife invested in a couple of excellent rakes – good and wide, with springy plastic teeth – and I'd not deny that a certain satisfaction derives from seeing green sward emerge as the scatter of red, brown and yellow is scratched back.

Yet soon irritation rises

at the very slowness of the operation, and at the way fresh droppers immediately start dotting the expanse so laboriously swept clean. Another savage provocation is the knack which some leaves have of landing with their stalks in the cracks between paving stones so that only a direct pull with finger and thumb will dislodge them.

When it comes to clearing, I am a perfectionist: as with mowing grass or weeding vegetables, unless I do the job thoroughly, I see no point in doing it at all. The instant ruin of one's efforts is therefore doubly vexatious. Yet one must at all costs resist the temptation to go back over the ground, picking up individual leaves. That way madness lies: the next thing you know, you will be trying to count the leaves left on the tree, or to estimate how many hundred thousand have fallen already. You are only one step away from Nebuchadnezzar, on all fours and eating grass.

Every year it seems to me that the trees close to our house have entered into a silent conspiracy to divest themselves at

different times. The first and worst creator of havoc is a poplar, whose leaves are large and bright yellow. Close behind it, in terms of time and the power to annoy, come three ornamental cherries, strategically deployed to create maximum scatter. Compared with these, the mulberry is an only minor menace, as is the weeping birch. The fig tree, on the other hand, is in a league of its own for sheer volume, its discards being the size of dinner plates.

The simplest way of dealing with the problem would be to take no action until all the trees were bare – but by then deep drifts would have formed, killing the grass and plants underneath them, and in any case, visitors arriving during the past few weeks would have found the place in a mess.

There is always a chance that the wind will help. An easterly gale would blast the remaining leaves harmlessly away over our own fields. Unfortunately, the prevailing wind is west and, no matter how it rises and falls, drifts always end up in the same few favourite places.

Keep at it, then. As I rake, my mind often turns

for solace to four of the most memorable lines in the *Iliad*. "As with the generations of leaves, so with those of men," wrote Homer. "[In autumn] the wind showers leaves to the ground, but when the season of spring has come, the burgeoning wood puts others forth. So also with men: one generation flourishes, and another withers away."

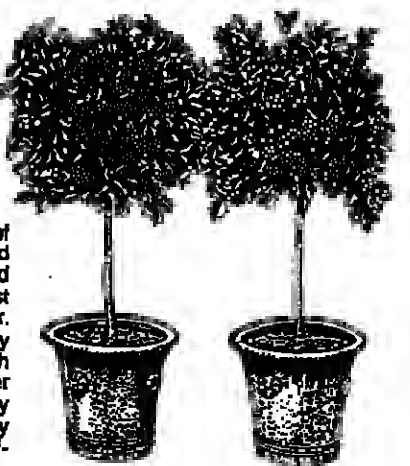
The words are spoken by the Lycian leader Glaucus as he challenges the Greek hero Diomedes in single combat in the gap between the armies halting for Troy. The simplicity of the original, which can hardly be rendered in English, makes the passage intensely moving.

Thinking about it keeps me going for a while: is it not extraordinary that anyone could have expressed so poignant an idea, with such precision, in hexameter verse at least 800 years before Christ? But then I see a sudden swirl of wind ruin my latest handiwork, and I lay a bet with myself that Homer, who is reputed to have been blind in old age, never had to spend hours wielding a rake.

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Cash machines that help you spend.....23
Charity Christmas cards: who gains the most.....27

Rosalind Russell concludes her series on moving house

"As a species we like being in circumstances we can control or predict - which explains the popularity of package holidays."

It can be a ghastly mistake to return to old haunts to see what the new owners have done to the house. Author Rosie Thomas remembers all too clearly the embarrassment of spotting the couple who sold her their north London home peering over the hedge some months later. They had, they told the oasny who was sent to answer the door, come to hand over the barbecue spit for the oven which they had packed and removed by mistake. But Ms Thomas obviously didn't need it... the rest of the oven had been ripped out and replaced, and was awaiting collection by the rubbish van, in the front garden.



Photograph: John Lawrence

Do you care who buys your home? Penny Jackson reports

Few know the dilemma better than Roger Lane. A Gloucestershire farmer from a village near Tewkesbury, he is selling a house that has been in his family for three hundred years, and is the ninth generation to farm the land around Chaceley Hall. He and his wife Rose and two children will move into a house they are building on the land.

Sentimentality can breed stubbornness. When Gold Walker came to sell her large family house in South London before the property market collapsed she knew exactly who she wanted to buy it, and she wasn't going to be bullied by an agent. When she finally found the right couple, they were surprised to be

The size of her financial sacrifice is rare, but the principle is not. Atty Beor-Roberts of Knight Frank's Cirencester office was recently selling a £750,000 house for a client who very much wanted it to go to a family. There were two bidders, one a local family, the other a woman on her own from London. "When the local family came round, my client got on very well with the wife. She wanted them to have the house and made this

No wonder, then, that estate agents are so keen to impress on buyers the importance of getting on with the vendor. Nor is it always just a matter of the owner's preferences, some are generous enough to consider the neighbours. Robin Thomas of Strutt & Parker's Exeter office was asked to sell a house to a family who would send their children to the local school. Another client rejected an offer of £2,000 more because the bidder had seven dogs. "She couldn't bear the thought of her neighbours being kept awake all night," he said.

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A flat vote for security and comfort

City dwellers prefer apartments to houses, says Stella Bingham



"Apartments are simply horizontal houses" say the developers of Symphony Court in Birmingham

Photograph: Newsteam

Give up the draining daily commute to work. Abandon the search for the elusive parking space. Forget about the breathalysers when out on the town. The cure for stress is city centre living, where shops, restaurants and jobs are all a short stroll away from home.

The number of households in England is expected to rise by 4.4 million by 2016 and the Government wants at least 50 per cent of these new homes to be on urban land. The move is already well underway. Inner-city former industrial sites and rubbish-clogged canal-sides have been transformed into places where people work, rest and play. Cities such as Newcastle and Leeds no longer die after dark.

For most people, an urban home means an apartment, but the house-builder Barratt has identified a demand for traditional, two-storey houses in inner London.

developments in Limehouse, Poplar and Bernmoosey have all been snapped up. Barratt East London chairman, David Pretty, says that: "Even in areas where commerce and the City are the focus of working lives and flat dwelling is the norm, there are still people who feel that the ideal property is their own house with their own front door and a private garden."

Chris Shaw and Laure Thebault, who both work for an insurance broking firm in Aldgate, paid £84,000 for a two-bedroom townhouse in St James's Walk, beside Canary Wharf. "The thing that impressed me most about the house was the fact that it had a garden," says Chris. "I had been wanting one for some time. There aren't many properties so close to the City which have gardens."

"Also, there was a problem parking with my old flat. Now I have my own parking space."

But flats are still first choice for most city-dwellers. Steve Sayers, of Beazer Homes' Edinburgh region, reports that: "Buyers come from all walks of life—from young professionals who do not have time to spend in the garden, through to couples approaching retirement who are looking for a home they can leave in the knowledge that security will not be a major issue." Beazer is launching two new developments of one- and two-bedroom flats in Edinburgh. Prices start at £39,995.

When Dr Keith Sansom, 52, chairman and chief executive of the BIP Group, and his wife Jennifer, 50, needed a Birmingham base to add to their homes in London and Sydney they chose a two-bedroom flat in Symphony Court, a smart waterside development in the city centre.

"We wanted something safe, secure, lockable but with all the advantages of the city," says Jennifer, who works and studies

in London during the week. "We chose a flat with a terrace, for the sun and its aspect. We did not buy a townhouse because we wanted to keep to a budget and we felt a flat could give us what we wanted."

"It totally fulfils our needs. It's an upmarket crash pad for my husband in the week, and I can come and go as I want. I enjoy the buzz of living in a city and there are concerts and theatres nearby."

Per square foot, the three-storey townhouses and the flats cost about the same, says Keith Peppering of Symphony Court's developers, Crosby Homes. "Apartments are simply horizontal houses. But the houses are larger because of stairwells and so on, so they cost more. With townhouses you have the advantage of your own front door, no shared hallway and a garden, but many people feel apartments offer a greater degree of security."

Prices for remaining properties start at

£89,950 for a two-bedroom flat.

"We see a lot of people who live in London when they are single, move out when they have a family and move back in when they are 55-plus," says Mike Dobner, sales and marketing manager of Fairbairn Homes. "And they are generally looking for a flat with two bedrooms, two bathrooms, a nice outlook, off-street parking and access to the Tube. There is the lock-up-and-leave factor. In a house, people tend to know you are not there."

Mike Dobner agrees that it costs roughly the same to build townhouses as flats. Richard Wood-Penn, joint managing director of Fairbairn disagrees. "It is almost invariably more expensive to build flats because once you go over three storeys you have lifts and a higher level of servicing. They are more expensive structurally, and you have a greater density of bathrooms and kitchens."

Nonetheless, Fairbairn's three London developments in Limehouse, Chelsea and Westminster are all apartments. "We are largely driven by planning constraints. These are areas where tall buildings are acceptable and we are following the style. And there is more demand for flats from urban dwellers." Prices at Dumbur Wharf, Limehouse, range from £85,000 for a one-bedroom apartment to £275,000 for the penthouse.

Tim Truman of Charles Church also believes that up-market apartments can be more expensive to build than townhouses of similar quality. "If you have gated entrances, lifts and underground parking you are going to pay a premium. These are the sort of properties that appeal to wealthy singles and divorced people and overseas buyers."

Whatever the price, it seems that for city slickers, flats win hands down over townhouses.

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Foreign Exchange Rates

STERLING

Country	Spot	1 month	3 months
US	1.8487	12-10	36-20
Canada	2.1801	10-10	31-10
Germany	2.4829	05-09	19-14
France	8.2047	107-163	326-359
Italy	2.6081	7-7	100-103
Japan	184.84	81-10	277-272
ECU	1.2875	21-18	98-91
Belgium	21.250	15-10	43-43
Netherlands	16.832	10-10	127-123
Denmark	5.7826	70-68	228-213
Sweden	0.9976	5-1	45-10
Spain	16.832	10-10	127-123
Switzerland	2.0680	80-78	228-213
Portugal	2.0118	10-10	127-123
Hong Kong	12.732	83-82	300-168
Malaysia	4.1482	0-4	0-4
Singapore	2.1238	0-4	0-4
Saudi Arabia	0.1758	0-4	0-4
Thailand	2.3304	0-4	0-4

DOLLAR

Spot	1 month	3 months
1.00		
1.2315	24-23	75-73
1.5078	20-28	90-87
5.5890	80-81	280-281
1.5714	30-28	115-114
111-77	42-47	149-142
1.2091	12-14	44-45
31.218	21-21	78-78
5.6303	30-28	298-297
1.8913	30-28	122-115
1.6828	9-8	32-32
1.2047	20-20	2-7
2.5312	27-29	80-85
1.1122	54-56	1-2
3.7355	1-4	5-9
1.4528	24-19	70-69

D-MARK

Spot	1 month	3 months
0.6832		
0.8833		
1.0000		
0.9262		
0.8112		
74.1246		
0.9228		
1.3850		
0.9112		
1.1211		
1.0108		
1.1211		
0.9700		
0.9100		
2.8284		
0.9308		

OTHER SPOT RATES

Country	Spot	Dollar	Country	Spot	Dollar	Country	Spot	Dollar
Argentina	1.9408	0.3958	Algeria	132.078	80.8000	Chad	132.078	80.8000
Brazil	2.1801	0.1010	Angola	68.018	40.5000	Comoros	132.078	80.8000
China	1.9554	1.0254	Botswana	68.018	40.5000	Cote d'Ivoire	132.078	80.8000
Colombia	1.9554	1.0254	Burkina Faso	68.018	40.5000	Cote d'Ivoire	132.078	80.8000
Cuba	1.9554	1.0254	Burkina Faso	68.018	40.5000	Cote d'Ivoire	132.078	80.8000
Czechoslovakia	1.9554	1.0254	Burkina Faso	68.018	40.5000	Cote d'Ivoire	132.078	80.8000
Denmark	1.9554	1.0254	Burkina Faso	68.018	40.5000	Cote d'Ivoire	132.078	80.8000
Egypt	1.9554	1.0254	Burkina Faso	68.018	40.5000	Cote d'Ivoire	132.078	80.8000
France	1.9554	1.0254	Burkina Faso	68.018	40.5000	Cote d'Ivoire	132.078	80.8000
Germany	1.9554	1.0254	Burkina Faso	68.018	40.5000	Cote d'Ivoire	132.078	80.8000
Ghana	1.9554	1.0254	Burkina F					

Notes

Notes: Forward market rates are quoted on a bank-to-bank basis. Spot rates are quoted on a bank-to-bank basis. All rates are quoted on a bank-to-bank basis.

Jonathan Davis

Avoid

Investment trusts are facing a tough time. The class acts will come into their own but the less competent will stumble



A couple of weeks ago, the NatWest duo delivered their lat-

However much the marketing men may try to convince you otherwise, investment trusts are an industry like any other, with the

Some correction after the boom period of 1993-94 was inevitable, and what we are seeing now, in NatWest's view, is a necessary process of digestion. Whether you look at three-year, one-year or

As many as 100 of the 350 current trusts, reckons Mr Buchan, have never used gearing at all in their lives. He thinks it is time that investment trusts woke up to the competitive threat which OEICs may pose when they are finally introduced next year. (OEICs, or open-ended investment companies, are the new hybrid form of

Also on the horizon looms the spectre of changes in capital gains tax. The tax threat comes in a number of different forms, but none of them is likely to be good for the market or the investment trust sector. (One fear is that many of the big insurance companies will want to sell their chunky holdings in investment trusts if the accumulated CGT lia-

Management fees in particular are likely to come into the spotlight once more. Note, says NatWest, how new issues in the investment trust sector typically charge up to 1.5 per cent of assets under management as an annual fee, compared with the more typical 0.3-0.75 per cent range for existing generalist trusts.

But, overall, the odds must be that discounts will not narrow greatly in the short term. If so, the implication is that performance will continue to drag for those who are already fully invested, but that those looking to invest new sums should be able to find bargains – assuming they know where and how to look.

Peter Rodgers on how to force insurers to keep their promises

Many others (see table) are projecting a future performance considerably better than in the past across a range of products. Clearly, they are asking customers to take on trust the claim that they have trans-

formed their performance. There are several possible explanations. Companies may have had a disastrous investment performance that undermined past results. They may have achieved much bigger cost reductions than the rest of the industry. Or they may be borrowing from their reserves of free assets to subsidize new products and make them look better in the marketplace.

Another possibility is that some may be taking advantage of flexibility in the disclosure regulations, in effect by introducing new charges later on to bump up their income from customers. One loophole is that when actual charges on a with-

profits policy turn out to be higher than those a company projected when it sold the product (after making allowances for inflation), it is allowed to compensate by adjusting the bonus rates downwards.

This amounts to imposing a new surrender penalty not included in the projections made when the policy was sold. The Personal Investment Authority, the watchdog, defends this on the grounds that with-profits policies should be treated the same way as unit-linked policies, which are allowed to increase charges. The theory is that without freedom to raise charges, unforeseen events could drive the life insurer

into insolvency. This threat is so remote as to be irrelevant.

According to Mr Chapman, about two-thirds of the costs to a company of running a policy are for commissions and marketing. These are short-term and predictable. Other costs, such as overheads, administration, life cover and fund management fees, are much lower, and are also largely controllable. It seems highly improbable that unforeseen charges could drive a life company to the wall, says Mr Chapman.

When it comes to checking whether companies are raising the charges secretly, breaking faith with their customers, with-profits life

But in both cases, it would be hard for an individual policyholder to assess whether he or she had been treated honestly, without expert help. One solution would be for policyholder committees to be formed for each company to look at these issues and report on whether the promises have been kept.

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loose change

Newly-founded Guernsey-based Millennium Life Assurance has launched a three or six year Accumulator Plus Bond. Unlike some "guaranteed" high-income bonds on the market, which offer a guaranteed income that could be at the expense of capital, the Accumulator Plus offers a minimum return of 97.5 per cent of initial capital even if markets fall steadily.

The return builds to 142.5 per cent of the initial investment after three years if both the US and UK stock market indices rise in all three years, and up to 208 per cent after six years of continuous year-on-year gains. An income option pays out up to 5 per cent a year and still guarantees a total return of 112.5 per cent of capital if markets fall throughout, rising to 123 per cent of capital after three years of sustained growth in markets, and 178 per cent after six years.

Bonuses for gains in any one year are locked in and if markets fall the floor for the bonus is rebased at the lower

level for the following year. Proceeds are taxed as income on redemption. Minimum investment is £5,000 and bonds go on sale on November 18 through independent financial advisers.

Lambeth Building Society has launched a limited issue of fixed rate mortgages charging 7.45 per cent until January 2002 if borrowers take out ASU insurance or 7.65 per cent without. Property must be insured with the society. There is a fee of £295 and six months' interest penalty for repayment in the first five years.

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Manor Park offers a PEP invested in its own Dublin-based selected growth fund. Capital is guaranteed to maturity in 2002, and gains are linked to the FTSE 100 index up to a maximum of 230 per cent. Minimum investment is £3,000, maximum £9,000. Call Helpline on 0171-452-1345.

Many healthy returns

Alison Eadie looks at healthcare in our series on specialist funds

The election this week of a Democrat to the White House and a Republican majority to Congress was viewed by Wall Street as positive for healthcare stocks and they duly shot up in price. The last great bear market in healthcare stocks was in 1992, prompted by fears that Hillary Clinton was trying to nationalise America's healthcare industry. Her reforms failed and the consensus view now is that any further attempts at change will be much less radical.

Although pharmaceutical and healthcare companies have to compete globally to succeed, the market is dominated by the US because of its high private sector spending on health and because it spawns so many innovative companies. With some 1,000 quoted healthcare companies to choose from in the US alone, the range and opportunity is enough to keep most managers of specialist healthcare funds busy.

Framlington's Health Fund is usually 75 to 80 per cent invested in the US, but fund manager Antony Milford points out that in recent months European holdings have been the best performers. He would like to invest more in Europe. The fund holds a range of UK and European stocks including Pliva, a Croatian drug company. It has little in South-east Asia, as there are few domestic healthcare plays there. Mr Milford expects rising world demand for drugs and medical services to be met by US and European firms.

Advances in medical science generate new demand. The price of success is to some extent new diseases seeking a cure like Alzheimer's. Finally creeping privatisation of underfunded national healthcare systems in many developed countries opens opportunities to healthcare companies to step into the breach.

Big pharmaceutical companies are once again the stock market's darlings. In the past six months they have bounded ahead, leaving smaller healthcare companies behind. Biotech stocks, which could do no wrong at the start of year, are firmly out of favour. The reversal of sentiment has hurt funds like Framlington and GT Healthcare, which focus on smaller companies, more than those like Finsbury Worldwide Phar-



Critical condition: Changes in many national healthcare systems have opened up opportunities for companies Photograph: Glynn Griffiths

maceutical, which has a 60/40 split of large to small companies.

Framlington's long-term record is excellent. Over five years it has returned 180 per cent, compared with a rise in the S&P Healthcare Index of 85 per cent, but it has fallen since its peak in May, its problems compounded by a strong pound.

Some 35 per cent of the fund is in what Mr Milford describes as quoted venture capital. These are companies about to launch their first products but as yet making no profits. The risks involved in such a strategy are mitigated by the fund's spread of investment.

GT Healthcare, managed out of San Francisco, took a beating in the

summer after the speculative bubble burst. Manager Mike Yellen says disenchantment with over-valued new issues spilled into high-quality later-stage bio-techs. His response was to buy and the fund is up 21 per cent since January against an average for US healthcare funds of 7 per cent.

The bio-tech sector is also diverging, Mr Yellen says. Blue-sky companies present too great a risk, too long a wait before drugs get to market and too great a requirement for capital to offer shareholders a worthwhile return. However, later stage companies with drugs undergoing final trials can produce greater than expected sales when the drug finally hits the market.

Finsbury Worldwide Pharmaceutical, an investment trust which invests only in pharmaceutical and bio-tech companies, has been a victim of its own success. Demand for its shares has pushed their price to a consistent premium to net asset value. According to Micropal the trust shows total returns of 55 per cent over the past year. The trust's asset values have moved sideways in the past six months, but the premium persists.

British investors keen to buy into the long-term healthcare story have a limited range of retail funds to choose from. Unit trusts include Framlington Healthcare, Jupiter World Healthcare and City Finan-

cial Beckman Bio-tech. GTF's fund is a Dublin-based European unit trust. Among investment trusts there is Finsbury's Worldwide Pharmaceutical and Rothschild's International Biotechnology.

A new investment trust was also launched last month to participate in the \$2,500bn annual global healthcare spend. The Healthcare Reform Investment Trust, managed by HealthReform Partners in the US, invests in the whole spectrum of medical activity, with particular emphasis on medical devices and services. These, it points out, account for 90 per cent of healthcare industry spending, as opposed to just 10 per cent on drugs.

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A soft touch on the fringe

My biggest mistake

Comic
Arthur Smith

"MY trouble is, I've been a mug for letting myself get talked into putting money into very dodgy fringe plays, usually when I've had drunken actors blagging me into it late at night."

They give you all these figures and say, 'If it sells so many tickets, if it does this, if it does that, you'll make a lot of money.'

They're always skint and they badger you so much and prey on the fact that you're supposed to be in favour of the arts.

They just keep on turning the screw until, eventually, you let slip that you could probably afford to put a grand into it.

Then they put it on in some half-assed theatre and it snows, and no one turns up. It gets one bad review in the *Big Issue* and that's the last you ever see of your money.

I've done that three or four times now and,

although I'm not quite such a soft touch as I have been in the past, I wouldn't completely rule out doing it again - I'm certainly not immune to it. Let's just hope they don't read *The Independent*, or at least not the Money pages.

The last time I did it, I knew I was just giving them money, basically. I haven't been really skint since I was in my late twenties, and I'm 42 now.

Even before *An Evening With Gary Lineker* came out in 1991, I'd done a fair bit of telly and some fairly lucrative stand-up stuff.

But I was on the headline at one point. I've still got a fair few friends who are on the headline and you can't really blame them for wanting to get their hands on some of my bread. Occasionally, I get letters from drama students too, saying 'I'm a drama student, give me some money'.

At moments of weakness, I've also been known to

commission starving artists to do paintings for me. Then they turn up ages later with their masterpieces, looking for the money. I've got a whole roomful of the most ridiculous paintings.

Doing benefit gigs for charity is another thing I have a known weakness for. It often turns out at the end of it that the money finishes up going to someone who wants to buy a Land Rover and drive round Africa on holiday for a month. The benefit doesn't seem to amount to much more than that, you suddenly notice.

The thing is, I have absolutely no interest in money at all. I've got an accountant and I've had a succession of financial advisers of various types. I went to see one of them in his office once and he had pictures of cowboys all over the walls.

I laughed and laughed and he didn't know what I was laughing at - apparently, this bloke really was

genuinely interested in cowboys.

Because I'm a bit vague with money myself, I tend to just find someone I can trust and put it all in their hands. I do trust my accountant. I started with him through personal recommendation and anyone he suggests, I trust as well. In fact, he recommended the financial bloke I've got now.

What happened was, I got churned by one of my old financial advisers. Obviously, I didn't notice it, but my accountant picked up on it and now I've got a new financial adviser.

It's like Sting's accountant setting up all those bank accounts that Sting knew nothing about.

I don't want to put ideas in his head, but my financial planner could do that with me quite easily if he wanted to - he might have done it already, for all I know.

I don't suppose many people are as lackadaisical about money in all its forms

as I am but I really haven't got the interest or the inclination. I've got an endowment mortgage and whenever they try to talk to me about it, after about 30 seconds my eyes glaze over and I'm thinking about something else.

I've got a certain amount of money in - I think it's PEPs or unit trusts, somewhere like that.

I may not remember exactly where it all is but if I rang this bloke, I'm sure he could tell me all about it.

In the end, providing I'm not skint, that's all I'm really concerned about. Providing I've got enough for the next few weeks worth of beer, books and fags, I'm just not that interested in money - it's more boring to me even than cars.

Just you wait, now I'll get 20 people banging on my door saying, 'Oh, I've got this brilliant idea for you...'

Arthur Smith was talking to Paul Slade.

A cashpoint in the pub?

By Clifford German

Banks are set to bite back at long last against the growing competition from the likes of Sainsbury and Marks & Spencer, which are moving into the banking business. If NCR's Jim Adamson has his way the bank's chosen weapon will be a customised cash dispenser which can sell travel and theatre tickets, stamps, and even unit trusts, print and dispense phone cards and vouchers for special offers in supermarkets, as well as accepting deposits and dispensing cash.

Instead of offering a plain choice of cash with a receipt and cash without, the new machines offer a menu of services, which can be summoned at the touch of a button, and could deliver on the spot and then debit the customer's bank account accordingly.

Individual machines could be badged and branded to act as mobile outlets, with the screens continually advertising and selling a range of services selected by the owner/operators to passers-by.

It raises the prospect of a new generation of busy customers, getting stuck in a queue behind a line of needs-checking out all the latest offers, so installing a machine with just the right range of services for the locality will clearly be one of the secrets of success.

The new generation of machines is coming off the production line in NCR's Dundee factory and could be installed and operating in January. Banks are expected to be among the principal buyers, as they replace their existing stock of 22,000 machines around the country.

The dispensers, also known as ATMs, will replace still more branch banks and will be able to process a banking transaction at a real cost of just 1p, compared

with the 100p the average transaction across a bank counter costs. ATM transactions are also cheaper than telephone banking transactions, and unlike the other outlets the machines can actively advertise and sell a range of services to a captive audience.

Unlike all previous dispensers, which have been sold exclusively to banks and building societies, NCR will be selling or leasing its new range to anyone who wants one and has the space to install it.

The smallest of the new machines costs about £8,000-£10,000, stands about a metre square, and can sit on counters and desk-tops in post offices, pubs, supermarkets, car parks, railway stations, petrol stations and anywhere else potential customers congregate. It weighs about half a tonne, contains up to 20,000 banknotes, and comes complete with a safe and several other security features designed to deter ram-raiders.

Its big brother has four times the cash capacity, a deposit slot for cash and cheques, and a wide range of additional functions can be incorporated.

In the US, where the technology is ahead of the UK, individual entrepreneurs can and do buy machines, install them, contract out the supply of a range of services and charge the providers and the consumers a small fee for the convenience of using the machine.

Evidence shows that although older people still resist the idea of paying for a service they could get free in another place and time, most people under 45 have no qualms about paying a small sum for the convenience of getting the service here and now.

Overall, 80 per cent are willing to pay. Will you?



What else? The new generation of cash machines could dispense theatre tickets, stamps, even unit trusts

Prevent grey hairs with our special stress-free mortgage for first time buyers



Before

After

Worried about premature greyness?

Worry no more. Alliance & Leicester has a tonic that makes all your mortgage worries miraculously disappear.

A package that includes up to £4000 cashback (2% of your loan), so you can afford that extra furniture you need. Free accident, sickness and unemployment insurance cover until

31 December 1997, to put your mind at rest.

What about those hidden fees?

Relax. Unlike most lenders, we won't charge a High Percentage Loan Fee (that's what you normally pay when you borrow more than 75% of the value of your house).

We don't charge arrangement fees either.

And we'll even refund your valuation charge.

If you still think you've spotted a grey hair, simply consult your branch Mortgage Advisor to relieve you of any unnecessary worries.

To find out more, calmly pop into your local branch or call us on 0800 412 214.

You can stop looking in the mirror now.

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CONDITIONS AND RESTRICTIONS APPLY TO THE FREE ACCIDENT, SICKNESS AND UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE COVER. FULL DETAILS ARE AVAILABLE FROM YOUR LOCAL BRANCH. THE SOCIETY'S VARIABLE BASIC RATE (CURRENTLY 5.99% L25 APR) WILL BE CHANGED THE FIRST TIME BUYER MORTGAGE IS RESTRICTED TO 75% OF THE PURCHASE PRICE/VALUATION (WHICHEVER IS THE LOWER). THE SOCIETY'S FIRST TIME BUYER MORTGAGE IS ONLY AVAILABLE TO NEW CUSTOMERS FOR RESIDENTIAL MORTGAGES. THE 3% CASHBACK IS PAYABLE AFTER COMPLETION OF YOUR MORTGAGE UP TO A MAXIMUM OF £4000. THE VALUATION REFUND IS LIMITED TO THE VALUE OF THE SOCIETY'S OPTION 1 VALUATION AND IS PAYABLE AFTER COMPLETION OF YOUR MORTGAGE. TO QUALIFY FOR A VALUATION REFUND, THE SOCIETY MUST CHOOSE AND INSTRUCT THE VALUATION PROVIDER OVER IN SCOTLAND. THE VALUATION REFUND CANNOT BE USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH ANY OTHER VALUATION REFUND OFFER. NO ARRANGEMENT FEE IS PAYABLE IN RESPECT OF THE FIRST TIME BUYER MORTGAGE, BUT YOU WILL STILL INCUR LEGAL COSTS. IF YOU WANT TO PAY BACK ALL OR PART OF YOUR MORTGAGE WITHIN THE FIRST 5 YEARS, THE REPAYMENT FEE PERCENTAGE MUST BE PAID. THIS WILL BE CHARGED AT 5 MONTHS' DRIVING INTEREST AT THE SOCIETY'S BASIC VARIABLE RATE IN THE FIRST 3 YEARS, AND 3 MONTHS' IN YEARS 4 AND 5. IF YOU WANT TO TAKE OUT THIS REPAYMENT OBLIGATION, YOU MAY PREFER OUR BASIC VARIABLE RATE MORTGAGE WITHOUT A CASHBACK OR OUR NO REPAYMENT FEE MORTGAGE. IF THE SOCIETY AGREES TO YOU TRANSFER FROM YOUR CURRENT PRODUCT TO ANOTHER OF THE SOCIETY'S PRODUCTS, WITHIN THE REPAYMENT FEE PERCENTAGE, THE REPAYMENT FEE WILL BE PAYABLE AT THE TIME OF TRANSFER. THE REPAYMENT FEE WILL BE WAIVED IF YOU MOVE HOME AND IMMEDIATELY TAKE OUT YOUR NEW MORTGAGE WITH THE SOCIETY. IF YOUR MORTGAGE INCLUDES AN ELEMENT OF BORROWING UNRELATED TO THE PURCHASE OF YOUR HOUSE, OR IMPROVEMENT TO IT, THE MORTGAGE MUST BE RESTRICTED TO 75% OF THE PURCHASE PRICE/VALUATION (WHICHEVER IS THE LOWER). ANY SUCH LOANS UNRELATED TO YOUR HOUSE PURCHASE, OR IMPROVEMENT TO IT, MAY BE CHARGED AT A DIFFERENT RATE. FULL DETAILS ARE AVAILABLE AT YOUR LOCAL BRANCH. FOR INTEREST ONLY MORTGAGES, AN APPROPRIATE REGIONAL COUNTRY PLAN (PEP, REPAYMENT PLAN OR ENDOWMENT PLAN) MUST BE IN PLACE AND IS THE BASIS OF THE LOAN MUST ALSO BE ARRANGED (CONTINGENT UPON PREMIUMS) WILL BE PAYABLE TO THE CREDITORS. YOUR HOME IS SECURED FOR THE LOAN AND MUST BE ADEQUATELY INSURED. LOANS ARE SUBJECT TO STATUS AND VALUATION, AND ARE ONLY AVAILABLE TO PEOPLE AGED 18 OR OVER. FOR LOANS EXCEEDING 75% OF THE PURCHASE PRICE/VALUATION, (WHICHEVER IS THE LOWER), A HIGH PERCENTAGE LOAN FEE IS NORMALLY CHARGED. DETAILS OF THIS FEE ARE AVAILABLE AT YOUR LOCAL BRANCH. HOWEVER FOR THE FIRST TIME BUYER MORTGAGE, THIS FEE WILL BE PAID BY THE SOCIETY. IN THE EXAMPLE GIVEN THIS WOULD BE £3000. FULL DETAILS ARE AVAILABLE ON REQUEST. 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Best borrowing rates

Telephone	% Rate and period	Max fee	Incentive	Redemption penalty
MORTGAGES				
Fixed rates				
Scarborough BS	0800 590547	0.20 for 1 year	85	0.75%
Capital Home Loans	01252 812271	4.35 to 1/2/99	75	£295
Northern Rock	0800 591500	7.49 to 1/1/02	95	£295
Variable rates				
Scarborough BS	0800 590547	0.65% for 1 year	90	—
Principality BS	01222 344188	3.50% to 1/1/98	75	—
Northern Rock BS	0800 591500	4.24% to 1/1/00	95	£295
First time buyers fixed rates				
Alliance & Leicester	via local branch	2.10 to 1/10/97	95	0.5%
Newcastle BS	0191 244 2468	6.49 to 1/1/00	95	£295
Cheltenham & Gloucester	0800 272131	7.59 for 5 years	95	£495
First time buyers variable rates				
Principality BS	01222 344188	1.00 to 1/1/97	90	—
Greenwich BS	0181 858212	3.49% for 2 years	95	£250
Northern Rock BS	0800 591500	5.24% to 1/1/02	95	—

Telephone	APR %	Max LTV	Fixed monthly payments (£2,000 over 3 years)
Unsecured			
Northern Rock BS	0345 421421	12.9H	With insurance
Direct Line	0141 2489966	13.9E	Without insurance
Nationwide BS	via local branch	14.9	£112.86
			£112.86
			£113.15
Secured (second charge)			
Clydesdale Bank	0800 240024	7.5	Max LTV Advance
Royal Bank of Scotland	0131 523 7023	8.7	£3K - £15K
Barclays Bank	0800 000929	9.3/9.6	£2.5K-£100K

Telephone	Account	Authorised % pm	Unauthorised % pm	APR
OVERDRAFTS				
Woolwich BS	0800 400900	Current	0.76	9.5
Alliance & Leicester	0500 959595	Current	0.76	9.5
Abbey National	0500 200500	Current	0.94	11.9

Telephone	Card Type	Min Income	Rate % pm	APR %	Annual Fee	Int. free period
CREDIT CARDS						
Standard						
Co-operative Bank	0800 109000	Advantage Visa	—	0.64N	7.90N	nil
Robert Fleming/S&P	0800 829024	MasterCard/Visa	—	0.9167	11.50	0 days
RBS Advanta	0800 077770	Visa	—	0.94N	11.90N	56 days
Gold cards						
Co-operative Bank	0345 212212	Visa	£20,000	0.50	10.50	£120
RBS Advanta	0800 077770	Visa	£20,000	0.94N	11.90N	56 days
Royal Bank of Scotland	01702 362990	Visa	£20,000	1.05N	14.50N	£35

Telephone	Payment by direct debit	Payment by other methods
STORE CARDS		
John Lewis	via store	1.39
Marks & Spencer	01244 681681	1.87
Sears	via store	1.94

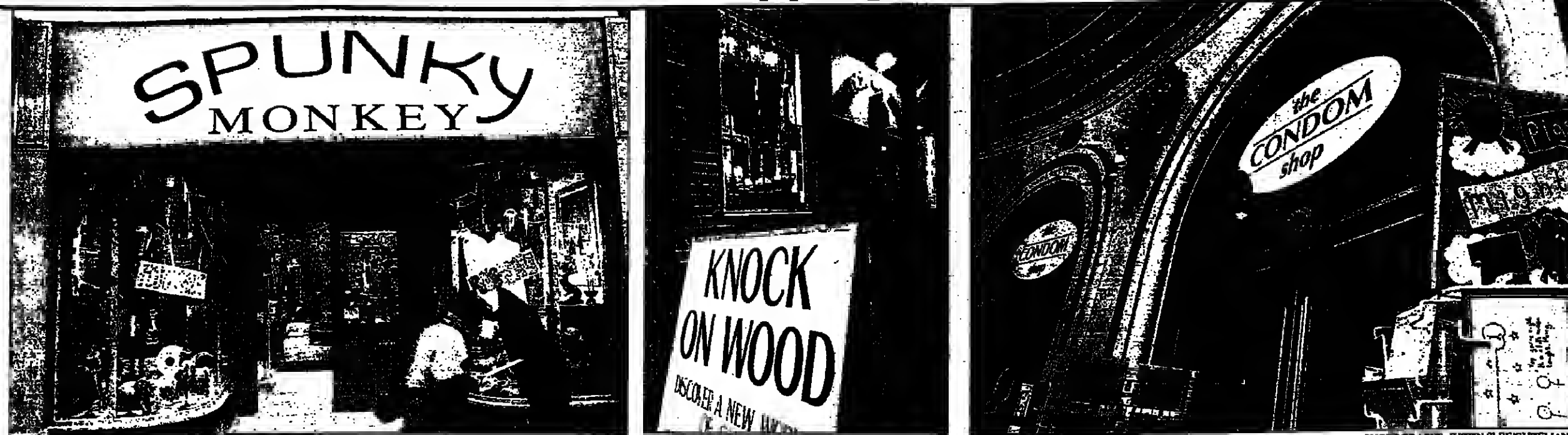
APR Annualised percentage rate. B+C Buildings and Capabilities Insurance (LV) Loan to value. ASU Accident, sickness and unemployment. Available to comprehensive motor insurance policyholders aged over 22 years. Introductory rate for a limited period. All rates subject to change without notice. Source: MONEYFACTS 01682 500677 7 November 1996

Best savings rates

Telephone number	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate %	Interest interval
Portman BS					
Co-operative Bank	0345 252000	Instant Access	Instant	£100	4.50
Direct Line	0181 667 1121	Instant	Instant	£5,000	4.75
Direct Line	0181 667 1121	Instant	Instant	£10,000	5.50
Direct Line	0181 667 1121	Instant	Instant	£50,000	5.75
Teachers' BS					
Alliance & Leicester	01202 887171	Bullion	Postal	£500	4.80
Bristol & West BS	0800 228858	Instant Direct	Postal	£5,000	5.40
Bristol & West BS	0800 901109	Instant Access Postal	Postal	£10,000	5.85
Bristol & West BS	0800 901109	Instant Access Postal	Postal	£25,000	6.05
Cheltenham & Gloucester					
Cheltenham & Gloucester	0800 132351	POST-Net 20 Day	20 day P	£5000	6.05
National Counties BS	01372 747771	Direct 30	30 day P	£100	5.50
Greenwich BS	0181 858 8212	Direct 90	90 day	£2,000	6.30
Greenwich BS	0181 858 8212	One Year Term	1 Year Bond	£2,500	6.50
Kleinwort Benson					
Halifax BS	01202 502404	HICA	Instant	£2,500	5.00
Halifax BS	01422 353333	Asset Reserve	Instant	£10,000	4.00
Cheltenham BS	0800 717515	Classic Postal	Instant	£10,000	4.35
Cheltenham BS	0800 717515	Classic Postal	Instant	£25,000	4.65
Birmingham Midshires					
Birmingham Midshires	0645 720721	Fixed Rate Bond	1 Year	£5,000	6.30F
Yorkshire BS	0800 378336	Fixed Rate Bond	31/3/98	£5,000	5.60F
Leeds & Holbeck	0113 225 7777	Fixed Rate Bond	2 Year	£1,000	6.85F
Coventry BS	0345 665622	Fixed Rate Bond	30/11/99	£1,000	7.30F
Sun Banking Corp.					
Sun Banking Corp.	01438 744505	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£8,575	7.50F
West Bromwich BS	0800 200400	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£5,000	7.45F
Birmingham Midshires	0645 720721	Inflation Beater	5 years	£1,000	7.00
Principality BS	01222 344188	Inflation Beater	5 years	£500	6.80
Sun Banking Corp.					
Sun Banking Corp.	01438 744505	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£9,000	7.50F
West Bromwich BS	0121 607 2415	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£3,000	7.45F
National Counties BS	01372 747771	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£9,000	7.20
Birmingham Midshires	0645 720721	Inflation Beater	5 years	£1,000	7.00
Premium Life					
Premium Life	0800 838020	1 year	£10,000	5.25FN	Year
Premium Life	0800 838020	2 year	£10,000	5.70FN	Year
Premium Life	0800 838020	3 years	£10,000	5.75FN	Year
Premium Life	0800 838020	4 years	£10,000	5.90FN	Year
Premium Life	0800 838020	5 years	£50,000	6.30FN	Year
Woolwich BS					
Woolwich BS	00 350 76168	Nova Access	Instant	£25,000	6.30
Northern Rock	01481 714600	Offshore 30	30 day	£25,000	6.35
Derbyshire (004) Ltd	01624 663432	90 Day Notice	90 day	£25,000	6.55
Northern Rock	01481 714600	Millennium Bond	1/1/00	£10,000	7.50F
Investment Accounts					
		1 month	£20	4.75	Year
			£500	5.25	Year
			£25,000	5.50	Year
			£25,000	6.00	Month
			£25,000	6.25	Month
			£100	6.65F	Maturity
			£1,000	6.80F	Year
			£20,000	6.25F	Year
			£500	7.00F	Month
			£100	5.35F	Maturity
			£100	2.50+ipi	Maturity
			£25	6.75F	Maturity

P post only F fixed rate
N net rate A All withdrawals subject to 30 day loss of interest
All rates are shown gross and are subject to change without notice. Source: MONEYFACTS 01682 500677 7 November 1996

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While thumbing its nose at well-worn myths about spending power in the north, Leeds has kept its feet firmly on the ground

PHOTOGRAPHS: JUSTIN SLEE/GUZELIAN

Spending time in Yorkshire

Spendthrift goes to Leeds

Leeds is without doubt a thriving northern city, well into a period of regeneration that's seen the city grow in affluence and stature. A great club scene and flourishing designer market have also earned it the title of "hippest city in England", and it has recently been "chosen" by Harvey Nichols. But while thumbing its nose at well-worn myths about spending power in the north, Leeds has kept its feet firmly on the ground. A detour through the decidedly unprosperous Calls area, south of Boar Lane, will cause any visitor to do the same.

The city centre boasts one of the largest areas of pedestrianisation in England, and is extremely shopper-friendly. You're never far from a decent café for a bit of a sit down, and car parks are plentiful, though they fill up quickly. There are four staple shopping centres, including the rather down-at-heel Merriam and the improved Headrow centre. To get a taste of the New Leeds though, head for the beautifully restored arcades of the Victoria Quarter, The Corn Exchange and Granary Wharf (permanent shops and stalls), which is tucked down behind the station by the Leeds-Liverpool canal and really comes to life at the weekend.

Harvey Nichols, The Victoria Quarter (0113-204 8888)
Part "international lifestyle store", part local attraction, this is the icing on Leeds'

designer cake. The huge crowds contain a core of well-heeled ladies obviously relieved not to have to trek down to London for their Ferreris or their Jean Muir. The building's definitely stylish, but it feels rather small, especially in the food market on the fourth floor, where most of the actual buying was going on. One lady in particular, who thought it would be "all nice sausages and that", wasn't impressed. "Might as well go to Tesco's," she said.

Music

Knock on Wood Global Music Supplies Granary Wharf (0113-242 9146)
The first permanent shop to open in the Wharf - in 1988 - is a World Music extravaganza. There are Djembe drums (£150 - £270), a Gambian Balafon at £45, Didjeridus from £135 and lots of smaller wood and wind instruments. Everything in here produces sound, even the token box of Whoopie cushions!

Jumbo Records, St John's Centre (0113-245 5570)
A good, popular independent and one of the few that could still be called a "record shop". It has a pretty useful vinyl section as well as an excellent jazz CD section. Jumbo has managed to keep its CD prices competitive: chart and new releases average £13.99 (the new REM album is £12.99).

Specialist Shops

Kirkgate Stamp Co, 30 County Arcade, Victoria Quarter (0113-245 5404)
When it started 25 years ago, the business was strictly stamps. Having diversified, it would now rather be known as the Leeds collector's shop. It deals in militaria (Indian dagger circa 1800 at £40), coins, medals and cigarette cards. There's a neatly catalogued and varied postcard collection, and a medal-mounting service.

id Aromatics, 12 New Station Street (0113-242 4983)
One of the first specialist wholesale and retail aromatherapy businesses in the country, stocking over 100 essential oils (camphor, £1.60, to valerian, £9.50 for 10ml), as well as exotic and perfume oils, and their own blends (Zodiac at £2.50). They often stock unusual and "limited edition" oils too. Qualified aromatherapist Carolyn Swain is on hand to offer free advice and a mixing service to order, for a tiny charge of 35p.

The Condom Shop, Corn Exchange (0113-244 6532)
It's a sad fact that Brits have a hard time with rubbers. It seems quite appropriate that for a nation of titers, a condom-come-joke shop should provide a safe space for buying. As well as the usual brands you'll find Glow in the Dark Ticklers (£2.25 for one), and Topaz, the re-

volutionary new condom at £4.99 for six. Alongside these are plenty of rudy games like "Bunk", phallic candles (£4.99) and sweet willies.

Jewellery

Craft Centre and Design Gallery, City Art Gallery, The Headrow (0113-247 8241)
Selected by the Crafts Council, the Gallery has been going for 15 years and specialises in displays of contemporary jewellery by British designers, currently showing designs in silver, white metal and bronze. The atmosphere is un-fussy, and the works are not just exhibition pieces. Prices range from £10 all the way up to £5,500.

Food and Drink

The Tripe Shop, Leeds City Market (0113-244 0436)
The sale of tripe is still going strong, and here you'll get other food stuffs that can't be found at Tesco, or any branch of Harvey Nichols for that matter. Tripe is only 26p a quarter, and maws, or mouth parts, are 28p. Other delicacies are chitterlings (pig intestines) and elder (udders).

Beer Paradise, Granary Wharf (0113-242 9572)
A shop for adventurous beer drinkers stocking over 700 varieties from around the world, including Russian and Indonesian. There are about 350 Belgian

beers, like Duval, hailed as the "best beer in the world" (£1.49). They also sell Whiskey Beer and Tea Beer. Green Beer, which is completely natural, is brewed to a 17th-century recipe, and contains nearly 20 herbs and spices (also £1.49). Visit Paradise and find yourself in hops heaven.

Gifts and Accessories

Spunky Monkey, 97 Briggate (0113-244 0701)
After the promise of the name and bright green exterior, the substance of Spunky Monkey is essentially run of the mill miscellany: candles, mobiles, incense etc. Oh and wood, lots of wood. It's a menagerie of carved animals, from the tiniest mouse to a pair of life-sized Alsatians. A place to visit if you need a gift for a friend with one of those pig or cat obsessions.

Clothes

Leeds is blessed with branches of all the main high-street retailers (C&A, Bhs, Debenhams, Next). Designer frenzy is reflected in the high proportion of exclusive boutiques (Aspects, Olivers), most of which are in the Victoria Quarter. You don't have to look far to find Kareo Millen, Paul Smith or Ted Baker. However, there are some worthwhile alternatives.

Exit, The Corn Exchange (0113-246 9301)
A clothes and accessories shop for serious snow and skateboarders, where baggy rules over skinny and everything has a label. A Pervert, or Summer Style T-shirt is £25, plus a wide selection of Oakley Thermo-nuclear Protection. For those who need to be cool, but warm.

Grin, The Corn Exchange (0113-246 7470)
Religion streetwear "for movers and groovers". Flower-power love shirts for £24, ex-HM Prison orange (naturally) T-shirts with obligatory star are only £4.99, and guaranteed to cling. New and second-hand flack trousers from £10.

Bookshops

Mr Miles Antiquarian Bookshop 12 Great George Street (0113-245 5327)
Mr Miles has been around since 1870. It's quite spacious and has a fitting "old library" feel to it. As well as a lot of second-hand and good bargain books, they also keep rare, antiquarian and collectors books. Prices obviously vary, but a signed, extremely limited edition of Dylao Thomas's *In Country Sleep* costs £1,000.

Leeds Tourist Information 0113-242 5242

Liza Millett

The Book of the Year - Out Now

Heart of Britain

HEART OF BRITAIN is an amazing portrait of life in Britain in 1996, captured in hundreds of extraordinary photographs taken by ordinary people.

In a single week in July - Heart of Britain Week - thousands pictured the way we live, love, laugh and cope with life today.

Now the very best of them have been gathered into a beautiful hardback book you, your friends and family will treasure.

Every picture tells a story and helps save a life

All photographs were sent in, with a donation, to the Heart of Britain competition in support of Royal Brompton Hospital, the leading edge in heart research. All royalties from the sale of this book go to fight Britain's biggest killer - heart disease.

AVAILABLE NOW from branches of WH Smith, Menzies, Dillons, Waterstones and other good bookshops across the nation.

HOLD THE FRONT PAGE!



DON'T THROW IT AWAY!

30% of Britain's annual domestic rubbish is paper - and half of that is old newspapers.

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The newspaper industry is committed to recycling. We're used to thinking of old newspapers as a waste product - instead we should look at them as a resource - a valuable one.

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Issued by the NEWSPRINT & NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION GROUP



Charity
Jenny McClea

THE INDEPENDENT
Win a Prize
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To Enter
Christmas
Competition

The Independent
Royal Warrant holders

of Old Bond Street
a special
every Sunday
Christmas gift
Every day the
pulled out of
the special

How to enter

There are three
one to the
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Our easy to
win the prize
with the book
draw the book
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number

Christmas gift
Marketing Department
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Closing 31
Thursday

من الازهر

Jenny McClean on how Christmas cards are vital money raisers

How much of the money goes to the charities?

FAX: 0171 293 2505

[illegible]

هكذا عن الامم

ITV/Regions

[illegible]

Satellite

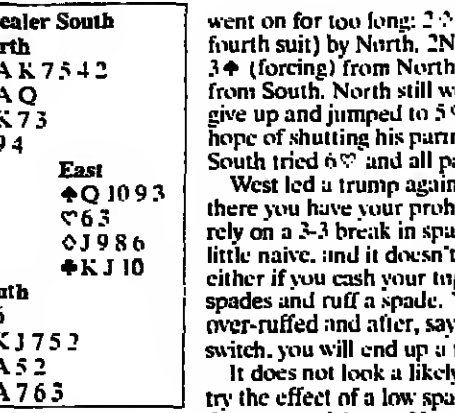
SKY SPORTS 3
7.00am Football Extra (38121294).
11.00 Watersports (70167623).

11.00 Drag Racing (50385720),
11.30 Speed and Beauty (9966329)
12.00 Squash (99398966), 1.00
Drag Racing (98303169), 1.30 Speed
and Beauty (55293256), 2.00-
3.00am Watersports (45289689).

Love 7.00 Spanish Archer 7.30 Mind and Body 8.00 Why Files 8.30 Video Box 9.00 Fate and Fortune 9.30 Fashion 10.00 Revelations 10.30 Looking for Love 11.00 Campus Carpers 11.30 Spanish Archer 12.00 Revelations 12.30 Why Files 1.00 Looking for Love 1.30 Fate and Fortune 2.00 Fashion 2.30 Mind and Body 3.00 Campus Ward 4.30 Campus

7.00 Looking for Love 8.00 Eric's Sport
7.00 Spanish Archer 7.30 Revelator
8.00 Bushido 9.03 Seventies Pop
9.30 Looking for Love 10.03 Eric's
Monster Sport Show 11.03 Fate and
Fortune 11.30 The Sex Show 12.00
6.00am Night-Time Programmes

Bridge Alan Hiron



problem hands
es along more
nk and yet the
missed at the
is the old story:
easier if you have
is a good play,
♠, North quickly
in rebid 2♣. It all
minor suit return in hand
dummy's second high trump
ruff a low spade in hand.
can draw the last two trumps
you still have ♠K on the
entry to the ♠ now established.
This all leads to five trump
four spades, two diamond
club. Total – 12 tricks. Bird

Entries to: Perplexity, the
Independent, 1 Canada St
Canary Wharf, London E

26 October competition a
Perplexity:
Rainclouds (land curios),
(her sows), thunderstorm
torment).
Literacy: Chan
Numeracy: The simplest c
possible ways is:
1+2+3+4+5+6+7+(8x5)
Winner: Rose Dacre (York

ACROSS

- 5 Perfume (5)
- 8 Swiss cheese (8)
- 9 Languid mode of speech (5)
- 10 Paraffin-oil (8)
- 11 Material used in gramophone records (5)
- 14 Filthy place (3)
- 16 Curb (6)
- 17 Arouse (6)
- 18 Limb (3)
- 20 Amused expression (5)
- 23 Mackintosh (8)
- 25 Plunder (5)
- 26 Former sweetheart (3,5)
- 27 E African country (5)

DOWN

- 1 Apt to let in water (5)
- 2 Sting (5)
- 3 Grind the teeth (5)
- 4 Seabird (6)
- 6 Woolen jacket (8)
- 7 Just-married (5-3)
- 12 Yellow flower (8)
- 13 Worship of false gods (8)
- 14 Body of salt water (3)
- 15 Sweet potato (3)
- 19 Genuinely (6)
- 21 Cutting implement (5)
- 22 Adult female (5)
- 23 Aquatic mammal (5)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:
ACROSS: 1 Harvard, 5 Sheer (Hertfordshire), 8 Trend, 9 Curious, 10 Hilarious, 12 Err, 13 Annual, 14 Escape, 17 Rio, 18 Milliners, 20 Conquer, 21 Expel.
23 Tense, 24 Tidings.
DOWN: 1 Hatch, 2 Rue, 3 Andorra, 4 Doctor, 5 Saris, 6 Exonerate, 7 Reserve, 11 Lowbrow, 13 Annual, 14 Escape, 16 Claret, 18 Mouse, 19 Silks, 22 Pen.

This is the type of problem hand that probably comes along more often than you think and yet the solution is usually missed at the table. I suppose it is the old story: matters are always easier if you have been told that there is a good play.

Perplexity

Mixed doubles:
Each rat usage wiped pin hoops.
 That sentence conceals three related one-word answers. To find them, all you have to do is regroup the six words into three pairs, then rearrange the letters within each pair.

A Larousse Desk Reference Encyclopedia will be awarded to the first correct answer opened on 14 November.

went on for too long: 2NT (the fourth suit) by North, 2NT by South, 3♦ (forcing) from North, and 3NT from South. North still would not give up and jumped to 5♦! In the hope of shutting his partner up, South tried 6♦ and all passed.

West led a trump against 6♦, and there you have your problem. To rely on a 3-2 break in spades is a little naive, and it doesn't work either if you cash your top two spades and ruff a spade. You are over-ruffed and after, say, a club switch, you will end up a trick short.

It does not look a likely start, but try the effect of a low spade from dummy at trick two. You win any minor suit return in hand, cross to dummy's second high trump and ruff a low spade in hand. Now you can draw the last two trumps and you still have ♠K on the table as an entry to the now established spades. This all leads to five trump tricks, four spades, two diamonds and a club. Total - 12 tricks. Bingo!

Entries to: Perplexity, 1he
Independent, 1 Canada Square,
Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL.

26 October competition answers
Perplexity:
Rainclouds (land curios), showers
(her sows), thunderstorm (Hurd's
comment).
Literacy: Can
Numeracy: The simplest of many
possible ways is:
 $1+2+3+4+5+6+7+(8 \times 9) = 100$
Winner: Ross Dawe (York)



The big picture

Night Shift
Sun 10pm C4

Actor-turned-director, Ron Howard, intended his second film as the helm as a vehicle for his *Happy Days* co-star Henry "The Fonzie" Winkler (above). What he got was a seed-bed for hot new talents such as Shelley Long, Kevin Costner and most importantly - Michael Keaton. *Night Shift* is darker and funnier than Howard's later entertainments (think *Splash*; think *Far and Away*). With Winkler and Keaton playing morgue attendants who run a prostitution ring on the side.

Television preview

Recommended viewing this weekend
by Gerard Gilbert

There's more to royalty than velvet and fine mugs, as Fergie would have put it in this week's edition of *Hello!* had she been acquainted with Mark Twain's children's classic *The Prince and the Pauper* (Sun BBC1).

Twain's book, which imagines what might have happened had the Tudor princeling, Edward, become mistaken for his spitting image, a cockney commoner (and vice versa), is the latest children's classic to be adapted for the Sunday time slot. It comes from the same team who made *Little Lord Fauntleroy* , and, as in that nicely-judged drama, the juvenile lead is cute without being cloying. And just because it's a children's drama, it doesn't mean that the sets are made of cardboard and the expenses have been spared on the costumes - which is just as well when you realise the potential for overseas sales. *Little Lord Fauntleroy* went on to win an Emmy in America, and the BBC will be hoping for something similar here. Keith Mitchell, by the way, reprises his most famous role - and, if anything, his Henry VIII has got more like with age.

The big ITV drama of the weekend is - surprise, surprise - a police drama. With echoes of the Colin Stagg affair, *Kiss and Tell* (Sat ITV) is a mostly absorbing (but slightly ludicrous) tale which has a policewoman going undercover as a "lonely heart" in order to catch a suspected wife-killer, played with nice ambiguity by Peter Howitt. Actors Daniel Craig (Geordie from *Our Friends in the North*) and Nicola Stephenson (Upstick lesbian, Margaret, from *Brookside*) are among the forces of law and order, and the spirit of *Prime Suspect* hovers nearby.

Talking of *Our Friends in the North* , the drama's writer, Peter Flannery, is one of those taking part in *The Road from Jarrow* (Sat BBC2), a personal odyssey through the last 60 years of British history by Mrs Thatcher's former press minder, Sir Bernard Ingham. The agenda is broadly Thatcherite, and, if you can swallow that, this is an ingeniously structured history lesson. It follows the marchers' steps from Jarrow to London, and takes in the Church of England's role in politics, unemployment, Methodism, social mobility and the transport revolution before they have even reached

The Road from Jarrow Sat 8.10pm BBC2
Kiss and Tell Sat 9pm ITV
Prince and the Pauper Sun 5pm BBC1
Equinox Sun 7pm C4
American Visions Sun 7.20pm BBC2
The South Bank Show Sun 10.45pm ITV



The big match

Georgia v England
Sat 11am Sky Sports 1
Highlights BBC1 10.50pm

Should he be playing? Should he be anywhere near an England shirt? "Saint" Glenn Hoddle obviously thinks Paul Gascoigne (above) is reformed - and, anyhow, this is a World Cup qualifier. Note the unusual start time.



Saturday television and radio

BBC 1

- 7.05 The Pink Panther Show (R) (2481354).
- 7.25 News, Weather (2631644).
- 7.30 Children's BBC: The Morph Files. 7.40 Speed Racer. 8.05 The Real Adventures of Jonny Quest.
- 8.30 The New Adventures of Superman (3099422).
- 9.15 Live and Kicking (S) (500118).
- 11.15 The Lord Mayor's Show. Barry Davies describes the scene as this anarchistic piece of street theatre hits the City of London once again (Subsequent programmes may change) (514880).
- 12.12 Weather (2429373).
- 12.15 Grandstand: 12.20 Football Focus. 1.00 News. 1.10 Racing from Cheltenham: the 1.15 Osmington Mills Holiday and Permit Trainers Association Handicap Chase. 1.25 Snooker: The second semi-final from the World Cup in Bangkok. 1.40 Racing from Cheltenham: the 1.45 Tote Silver Trophy. 1.55 Snooker: 2.10 Racing from Cheltenham: the 2.15 Rising Stars Novice Chase. 2.25 Snooker. 2.40 Rugby Union: Scotland v Australia. Live coverage from Murrayfield (Kick-off 3.00). 4.40 Final Score (S) (38099151).
- 5.20 News, Weather (7877712).
- 5.30 Regional News and Weather (115170).
- 5.35 Tom and Jerry (222267).
- 5.45 Children in Need. Terry Fugate continues the build-up to the annual fundraiser (S) (281151).
- 5.55 Jim Davidson's Generation Game (S) (881267).
- 6.55 Noel's House Party (S) (461847).
- 7.50 The National Lottery Live. Jimmy Nail gets the balls rolling (S) (722064).
- 8.05 Casualty. Caravan site grief for two young girls (S) (740847).
- 8.55 News and Sport: Weather (Followed by National Lottery Update) (588977).
- 9.15 Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance. In the 75th anniversary year of the Royal British Legion, Her Majesty the Queen, HRH the Duke of Edinburgh and other members of the royal family join the congregation for a festival of remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall (Subsequent programmes may change) (S) (92408267).
- 10.50 International Match of the Day. Highlights of England's World Cup qualifying match against Georgia in Tbilisi. Plus, rather shorter highlights of Holland v Wales and Northern Ireland v Germany. See *The Big Match*, above (S) (2214625).
- 11.55 The Stand-Up Show. Father Ted's Ardal O'Hanlon introduces another batch of microphone turns: Al Murray, Marcus Brigstocke, Sean Mo and Sean Lock (S) (754847).
- 12.25 Top of the Pops. From last night, with Simply Red, Bjork and - yes, I'm afraid so - Robson and Jerome. Jockey Frankie Dettori, rather oddly, is the host (S) (117855).
- 1.00 Woodstock 94. Further highlights from 'Woodstock 94', including performances by Jimmy Cliff, Green Day, the Spin Doctors, Arrested Development, James and the New Black Generals (627855).
- 2.40 Weather (7845297). To 2.45am.

BBC 2

- 7.15 The Saint Strikes Back (John Farrow 1939 US). George Sanders' Simon Templar delves into the San Francisco underworld to find out who is framing Wendy Barrie's father (3642151).
- 8.20 Open University: Education for All (2474625).
- 8.45 Empowerment (6038712). 9.10 A Question of Identity (4790441).
- 10.00 Chavakya (S) (6322985).
- 10.35 Network East (S) (6935996).
- 11.20 Bollywood or Bust! (S) (9471002).
- 11.50 Film 96 with Barry Norman. Michael Collins and The First Wives Club are re-broadcast (6165731).
- 12.20 The Gay Divorce (Mark Sandrich 1934 US). Having stolen *Flying Down to Rio* from its nominal headliners, Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers were given top billing for this lyrical musical about mistaken identities - dancing to Cole Porter's 'Night and Day', and doing an Oscar-winning 'The Continental'. Treat yourself (266996).
- 2.00 We Dive at Dawn (Anthony Asquith 1943 UK). The first of a double-bill of wartime movies directed by Asquith, and starring John Mills, is an exciting yarn about British submarines hunting German battleships in the Baltic (666644).
- 3.35 The Way to the Stars (Anthony Asquith 1945 UK). The lives and loves of a group of RAF airmen in this excellent, Terence Rattigan-scripted up-lift-stiffener. A first-class cast includes Michael Redgrave and John Mills (304183).
- 5.20 TOP 2. Pop old and new (S) (9479828).
- 6.05 Rhodes. 93. Last Sunday's concluding episode again (S) (589557).
- 7.00 News and Sport: Weather (140052).
- 7.15 Assignment. Reporter Ben Brown investigates Indonesia's President Suharto and his kinsmen, who have become one of the richest families in the world despite the extreme poverty of the rest of the country (S) (136809).
- 8.00 What the Papers Say. According to Christopher Sylvester of the Daily Express (S) (322248).
- 8.10 The Road from Jarrow. See Preview, above (S) (526977).
- 8.40 The Car's the Star. The story of the Mkl Jaguar (the one Inspector Morse drives) (S) (449480).
- 9.00 Have I Got News for You. Vincent Hanna and Tony Hawks guest from last night (S) (2119).
- 9.30 Prelude to a Kiss (Norman René 1992 US). Offbeat romantic fantasy whereby, after a whirlwind romance, Alec Baldwin and Meg Ryan are married. But when a mysterious old man kisses the bride, she undergoes a personality change (S) (423170).
- 11.15 Later with Jools Holland. (New Series) Kula Shaker, Joe Cocker, Jackson Browne, the Blue Nile and Orbital are the opening guests (S) (688064).
- 12.15 Video Diaries. Male stripper reveals all (166949).
- 1.15 The Traitor (Michael McCarthy 1957 UK). Second World War spies discover, during a reunion, that one of their number was responsible for betraying them to the Gestapo. With Donald Wolfitt (Then Weatherman) (883393). To 2.45am.

ITV/London

- 6.00 GMTV. 6.00 News. 6.10 Mole in the Hole. 6.30 Professor Bubble. 6.50 Bug Alert 7.10 Disney's Wake Up in the Wild Room. 7.20 Gargoyles. 8.50 Alien Rangers (1098373).
- 9.25 Wow. Panther and Wolf from the Gladiators pay a visit, as boy-band 91.1 play live (S) (72472609).
- 11.00 The Noise. Comes this week from New York, where Cyndi Lauper is our guide. Plus, a report from Kula Shaker's tour of Berlin (S) (9880).
- 11.30 The Chart Show (S) (98083).
- 12.30 Love Bites. Looking at dream dates and the issue of sex before marriage, while the studio guest is Gladiator Rhino. Last in series (S) (68712).
- 1.00 News & Weather (38884793).
- 1.10 Local News, Games and Videos (7275248).
- 1.45 Cartoon Time (24445469).
- 2.05 The Sandwich Man (Robert Hartford-Davis 1966 UK). Semi-silent vehicle for Michael Bentine finds the ex-Goon playing a sandwich-board man and pigeon-fancier wandering the streets of London anxiously awaiting news of his prize pigeon. If that weren't enough, the supporting cast includes Dara Brian, Suzy Kendall, Norman Wisdom and (scant consolation) Terry Thomas (146793).
- 3.50 SeaQuest 2032 (S) (2707557).
- 4.45 News: Sports Results: Weather (5108151).
- 5.05 London Tonight: Sports Results (Followed by LWT Weather) (5285915).
- 5.20 New Daywatch (S) (1984737).
- 6.15 Gladiators (S) (313248).
- 7.15 Blind Date (Including Lottery Result) (S) (335460).
- 8.15 Family Fortunes. Two families compete for cash and prizes under the cheery countenance of Las Dennis (S) (639538).
- 8.45 News: Weather: Lottery Result (Followed by LWT Weather) (593809).
- 9.00 Kiss and Tell. Feature-length police drama. See Preview, above (S) (80145002).
- 11.10 Omen IV: The Awakening (George Moritz, Dominique Othenin-Girard 1991 US). Ignore the title, this made-for-TV horror movie has little else to do with the once-successful series. I mean, an Omen movie without a Danter? Anyhow, the story, a young couple who are unable to have children adopt a baby girl. Need I say more? Paye Grant and Michael Woods' star (670712).
- 1.00 Funny Business. The ubiquitous Ardal O'Hanlon joins Vic and Bob (S) (88768).
- 1.30 Tropical Heat. US detective series. A bounty hunter and an FBI agent are out to settle a score (S) (4657923).
- 2.25 The Chart Show (S) (1362213).
- 3.15 El News Review (716107).
- 4.05 God's Gift (R) (5918403).
- 4.55 Night Shift (R) (S) (60728749).
- 5.05 Coach. Luther feels suffocated by his relationship with Lorraine (R) (S) (2926358).
- 5.30 News (35043). To 6.00am.

Channel 4

- 6.00 Sesame Street (1410118).
- 6.55 The Magic School Bus (3035793).
- 7.30 Really Wild Animals (771118).
- 7.50 First Edition (2384731).
- 8.05 King Arthur and the Knights of Justice (341000).
- 8.35 News Time (6034996).
- 9.00 The Morning Line (70731).
- 10.00 Gazzetta Football Italia (57793).
- 11.00 Bill (S) (77557).
- 12.00 Sign On. Visits the Deaf Film and Television Festival in Newcastle (S) (38083).
- 12.30 Test Pilot (Victor Fleming 1938 US). Clark Gable and Spencer Tracy play a couple of test pilots, supported by Myrna Loy and Lionel Barrymore (74264267).
- 2.40 Racing from Doncaster and Wincanton. Brough Scott and John Frankham introduce and of the season flat racing. Doncaster: The 2.55 Co-operative Bank Salford Stakes. 3.30 Tote Credit November Handicap and the 4.05 Coats Dragon Handicap Stakes. Wincanton: The 3.10 Badger Bear Handicap Chase and 3.45 Tanglefoot Elite Hurdle (S) (82329828).
- 4.35 Four-Mations: Electric Passions. Computer animated special effects (S) (4353199).
- 5.05 Brookside Omnibus (S) (750462).
- 6.30 Right to Reply (S) (977).
- 7.00 A Week in Politics (S) (1606).
- 8.00 In Remembrance. Ken Saro-Wiwa. Tribute to the Nigerian human rights leader on the first anniversary of his death. His hanging by the military dictatorship led to international outrage and Nigeria's suspension from the Commonwealth (S) (2034).
- 9.00 E.R. Famously controversial episode where Dr Greene makes a fatal blunder in misdiagnosing a pregnant patient (R) (833002).
- 9.55 Jo Brand Through the Cakehole. Includes the sketch where Minder actor Gary Webster wakes up beside Brand (R) (S) (850828).
- 10.25 NYPD Blue. The snappily edited cop squad investigate on discovering a pregnant woman's charmed remains (R) (513557).
- 11.25 Zorro (John Boorman 1973 UK). Beautifully photographed, supremely fabulous sci-fi tale with Sean Connery (plus John Wood) as the only red-blooded male in a colony of hyper-intellectual and immortal women. Charlotte Rampling takes our hero's fancy (657489).
- 1.20 Late License: Battle Angel Alita. Manga mayhem (S) (8722671).
- 2.30 The New Twilight Zone. Jenny Agutter stars in the tale of an ageing Lancelot summoned by Merlin who makes an offer he can not refuse (1514652).
- 2.55 United States of Television. Out-take from the 500 or so channels on offer (R) (S) (130855).
- 3.40 Full Frontal. Australian humour (S) (18153294).
- 4.10 The Real World. US flatshare verité (S) (3449403). To 5.10am.

ITV/Regions

- AREA 1**
As London except 12.30pm Movies, Games and Videos (68712). 1.10 South Wales (2259254). 1.40 Young Cars (29106915). 2.10 Alvin (2197354). 3.10 Film: The Hollywood Detective (70991809). 1.00am Camel Knowledge (67316). 2.00am Film: Up the Junction (12497). 4.00am Sound Bites (76415942). 4.10am Heller Slater (5837584). 5.00-5.30am World of Selling (44836).
- CHANNEL 3 NORTH EAST/YORKSHIRE**
As London except 12.30pm Movies, Games and Videos (68712). 1.10 Thunder in Paradise (5394900). 2.05 Film: Toy Tiger (420267). 3.45 Alvin (688977). 5.10 Channel 3 North East/Bat Time (622647). 7.05a. Scorpions (6229557). 1.30am Coach (551836). 1.55am War and Remembrance (622649). 3.45am Late & Loud (2806768). 4.40-5.30am Movies, She Wrote (5298316).
- CENTRAL**
As London except 12.30pm Movies, Games and Videos (68712). 1.10 Mole in the Hole (2259254). 1.40 Young Cars (29106915). 2.10 World of Selling (70991809). 3.10 Film: The Hollywood Detective (70991809). 4.00am Sound Bites (76415942). 4.10am Heller Slater (5837584). 5.00-5.30am World of Selling (44836).
- ITV**
As London except 12.30pm Movies, Games and Videos (68712). 1.10 Mole in the Hole (2259254). 1.40 Young Cars (29106915). 2.10 World of Selling (70991809). 3.10 Film: The Hollywood Detective (70991809). 4.00am Sound Bites (76415942). 4.10am Heller Slater (5837584). 5.00-5.30am World of Selling (44836).
- WESTCOUNTRY**
As London except 12.30pm Movies, Games and Videos (68712). 1.10 Mole in the Hole (2259254). 1.40 Young Cars (29106915). 2.10 World of Selling (70991809). 3.10 Film: The Hollywood Detective (70991809). 4.00am Sound Bites (76415942). 4.10am Heller Slater (5837584). 5.00-5.30am World of Selling (44836).
- S4C**
As C4 except 9.00am Morning Line (70731). 10.00 Rockies (13267). 10.30am Newsnight (47731). 12.30pm Movie/match (66354). 1.00 The Averages (61802). 2.00am Telling Tales (705815). 6.30am Radio Show (977). 7.00 News (845480). 7.15 Noon News (139333). 8.20 Gwyneth Davies Canteen for Art (1996) (9662903). 12.00am Battle Angel Alita (8722671). 4.15-5.10am Real World (332923).

Radio

- Radio 1**
57.6-59.9MHz FM
7.00am Kevin Greening. 10.00 Dave Pearce. 1.00 Jo Little. 4.00 John Peel. 7.00 Lovegrove Dance Party with Danny Rampling. 9.00 Radio 1 Rap Show. 12.00 The Radio 1 Reggae Dancehall Night. 2.00 Essential Mix. Bedroom DJ. 4.00-7.00am Claire Sturgis.

- Radio 2**
65.8-67.2MHz FM
6.00am Mo Dutta. 8.05 Brian Matthew. 10.00 Steve Wright's Saturday Show. 1.00 Carrot's Comedy Choice. 1.30 The News. 1.55 Huddines. 2.00 Jim Spinks. 4.00 Nick Hancock. 5.00 Reading Music. 6.00 Running in Concert. 7.00 Radio 2 Young Musician. 1996 Showcase. 8.00 Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance. 9.15 David Jacobs. 10.00 Folk at War. 12.05 Charles Nowe. 4.00-6.00am Mo Dutta.

- Radio 3**
93.0-95.0MHz FM
7.00am Record Review. 9.00 Building a Library. 10.15 Record Release. 11.15 Roussea. 12.00 Private Passions. Michael Berkeley talks to Clio Laine. 1.00 News: Simon Ratcliffe - Home and Away. 3.00 The Department Store. Celebrity Challenge. 3.30 Young Artists' Forum. Presented by Sandy Burnet. 5.00 Jazz Record Requests. With Geoffrey Smith. Live from the foyer of the Queen Elizabeth Hall, the very heart of the London Jazz Festival. 5.45 Music Matters. Is there any such thing as good taste in music? And does it matter? Ivan Hewett considers notions of musical decorum from the medieval period to the present. 6.30 Mes de Castro. A powerful and dramatic opera of love, murder and revenge by James MacMillan, based on a play about the murder of the eponymous crown prince of Portugal by John Clifford. Introduced by Geoffrey Blackwell. 9.15 Building for the Arts. Art centres should make sense, argues Sir John Drummond. They are cheap, they become a destination in themselves and they encourage people to expand their horizons. But do they generate interesting architecture? (6:6).

- 9.45 Zehnman's Bach. The



Choice

Polishing up its Zimmer frame, I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue (12.25pm R4, left) struggles on to the airwaves for a new series - this may be the last before the Mornington Crescent joke faces compulsory retirement. Later, veteran eccentric, Ivor Cutler, appears on Stanzas on Stage (11.30pm R4).

distinguished Austrian violinist plays Bach's solo sonatas and partitas. Recorded at the 1995 Edinburgh International Festival in the atmospheric setting of Greyfriars Kirk, Bach: Sonata No 2 in A minor. 10.15 Impressions. Live from the Vortex Jazz Bar in Stoke Newington, Brian Morrison introduces the quartet led by saxophonist Bobby Watson and trombonist Scott Simon. 12.30 Misteriosa. Ian Carr introduces tracks from mid-50s recordings made by The Meters. 6.55 Weather. 7.00 News. 7.50 Through the Night. With Donald Macleod. 6.00-7.00am Sequence.

Radio 4
15.4-16.4MHz FM (15.4-16.4MHz)
6.00am News Briefing. 6.10am Farming Today. 6.55 Weather. 7.00 News. 7.50 Weather. 8.00 News. 9.05 Sport on 4. 9.30 Breakaway. 10.00 News: Loose Ends. 1.00 News: The Week in West. 11.30 Eurofile. Lucy Ash goes inside a Russian prison and discovers prisoners awaiting trial who are suffering in cells where disease is endemic. 12.00 Money Box. 12.25 I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue. See Choice, above. 1.00 News. 1.10 Any Questions? 1.55 Shipping Forecast. 2.00 News: Any Answers? 2.30 Saturday Play: On the Edge of the World. Historical drama by Mike Donnell set at the time of King John. When

the archbishop of St David's in remotest Pembrokeshire becomes vacant, Gerald of Wales feels his Welsh ancestry should make him the perfect candidate. But the King suspects separatist tendencies, and the Pope has to intervene. 4.00 News: A History of Reading in Five Volumes. Does reading rot the brain and damage the womb? Don Fowler examines the history of rhetoric against women reading and asks why women now spend so much more time than men with books. 13.51. 4.30 Science Now. 5.00 File on 4. 5.40 The Warhorse. 5.50 Shipping Forecast. 6.00 Six O'Clock News. 6.25 Week Ending. 6.50 Ad Lib. Robert Robinson eavesdrops on a group of fishermen. 7.20 Kaleidoscope Feature. The impact of Igor Stravinsky on 20th-century music is not fully appreciated. Three contemporary composers pick a masterpiece of their choice and evaluate its legacy. 7.50 On These Days. 8.50 Saturday Night Theatre: The Butterfly Hunt. A tale of individual heroism by Matthew Salton. At the height of the Second World War, Ursula Graham Scott found herself and the Nazi bripespeople confronting the advancing Japanese in a remote part of Burma with virtually no weapons and no trained soldiers. With Siobhán Jenkins and Samuel West. 9.35 Classics with Key. 9.50 Ten to Ten. 9.59 Weather. 10.00 News. 10.15 The Seduction and Demise of Joseph Loughran. In Pausanias' drama, soft-hearted drunk Joseph Loughran has nothing more to look forward

to than hard work on a building site and a bit of love and lust. Then one fatal night he promises more than he can possibly deliver. 11.15 The Lobsenz Rampa-Lamp. Mystic Sean Murphy tells the curious story of Cyril Hoskins, the Devonshire plumber who reinvented himself as a Tibetan lama. 11.30 Stanzas on Stage. Ivor Cutler and his marvellous harmonium, recorded at the Birmingham Readers and Writers' Festival. See Choice, left. 12.00 News. 12.30 The Late Show: Fresh Blood and Formaldehyde. By Alex Jones. 12.48 Shipping Forecast. 1.00-6.00am As World Service.

Radio 5
(63.1-64.1MHz FM)
6.00am Dirty Talk. 6.30am Brian Hayes. 9.05 Weekend with Ker-... and Whitaker. 11.05 Top Gear. 1.35 Sixes as a Parrot. 11.55 Sport on Five. 6.06 Six O'Clock News. 6.30 World Cup Football. 9.05 Championship Boxing. 12.05 Night Talk. 2.00 Up All Night. 5.00-6.00am Morning Reports.

Classic FM
(10.1-10.9MHz FM)
6.00am Sarah Lucas. 9.00 Classic Countdown. 12.00 Gardening For. 1.00 Alan Mann. 4.00 Nick Bailey. 7.00 Russian Revelation. 8.00 Evening Concert. Gershwin: An American in Paris. Delius: Paris - The Song of a Great City. Offenbach: Galie Parisienne. Johann Spenner: Carnival in Paris. Mozart: Symphony No 31 in D (Paris). 10.10 The Classic Guide. 12.00 Azore Leon. 4.00 Travel Guide. 5.00-6.00am Michael Farstone.

Virgin Radio
(102.1-102.9MHz FM)
10.15-11.00am The Virgin Show. 11.00am Jasey Lee Green. 8.00 Russ and Jono. 10.00 Jeremy Clark. 2.00 Mark Forrest. 6.00 Lyn Parsons. 10.00 Robin Banks. 2.00-6.00am Howard Pearce.

World Service
(1984-1986 MHz)
1.00am Newsweek. 1.30 Inspiration. 2.00 Newsday. 2.30 People & Politics. 3.00 News. 3.15 Sports Roundup. 3.30 Music Review. 4.00 Newsweek. 4.30 Short Story: The Old Man and His Suitcase. 4.45 On the Move. 5.00 Newsday. 5.30-6.00am Weekend.

Satellite

SKY 1
7.00am Undun (98064). 8.00 Sally Jessy Raphael (23847). 10.00 Designing Women (64373). 10.30 Murphy Brown (74809). 11.00 Parker Lewis Can't Lose (16809). 11.30 Real TV (75381). 12.00 WWF (50557). 1.00 The Hit Mix (49151). 2.00 Hercules (69202). 3.00 The Lazarus Man (11354). 4.00 WWF (30489). 5.00 Pacific Blue (8441). 6.00 America's Dumbest Criminals (5460). 6.30 Tyson (66126). 7.00 Hercules (65422). 8.00 Unsolved Mysteries (44170). 9.00 Cops I (29373). 9.30 Cops II (97536). 10.00 Stand and Deliver (99178). 10.30 Revelations (76538). 11.00 Movie Show (31118). 11.30 Young Indiana Jones (11286). 12.30 Dream On (65768). 1.00 The Edge (74132). 2.00-7.00am Hit Mix (40107).

SKY MOVIES
6.00am The Ratings, the Cook and a hole in the Sky (1985) (66381). 8.00 They All Laughed (1981) (76354). 10.00 Kral (1983) (97249). 12.00 Jules Verne's 800 Leagues Down the Amazon (1994) (66977). 2.00 Cars of the Wild West (1991) (65973). 4.00 Troop Beverly Hills (1989) (39731). 6.00 The Beverly Hills Cop (1993) (49309). 8.00 Terminal Velocity (1994) (40354). 10.00 Deadlock (1992) (37260). 11.40 Terminal Velocity (1994) (335422). 1.25 Object of Obsession (1994) (47774). 3.00 The 6000 Year Beauty (1993) (40687).

MOVIE CHANNEL
6.00am A Hard Day's Night (1964) (108858). 7.10 Rattlesnakes (1943) (747037). 8.30 The Counterfeit Contessa (1994) (34351170). 10.10 Norwood (1974) (42521248). 12.00 Forbidden Memories (1995) (77847). 2.00 Dead Man's Revenge (1993) (56915). 4.00 Trapped in Paradise (1915). 6.00 Camille (1994) (36151). 8.00 Speechless (1994) (48996). 10.00 Kallisto (1993) (78929). 12.00 Cosmic Ship (1994) (33048). 1.30 The Evidence (1993) (33831). 3.00 No One Could Predict Her (1995) (58183). 4.40 Jitters (1943) (85074749).

SKY MOVIES GOLD
4.00pm Son of Sinbad (1955) (8476460). 6.00 The Muppets Take Manhattan (1984) (27230640). 8.00 The Killers (1964) (2735809). 10.00 The Beast (1988) (778462). 12.00 Lynne Live and Unleashed (1989) (1047221). 1.40 Nosferatu the Vampire (1979) (277581). 3.20-4.50am Tom, Dick

and Harry (1941) (22896132).
SKY SPORTS 1
7.00am World Sport (45996). 7.30 Cavalcade (26489). 8.30 Racing News (62199). 9.00 Boxing: Countdown to the Big Fight (62635). 10.00 Hold the Back Page (63315). 11.00 International Football: Georgia vs England (511471). 2.00 Bunting (38178). 3.30 Sports Saturday Results (42118). 6.30 Ice Hockey (65147). 6.30 Ice Hockey - Live (134712). 9.00 Rugby Union Update (83083). 11.00-1.30am Ice Hockey (988460).

SKY SPORTS 2
7.00am Soccer AM (597227). 11.00 Motorsport: American Sports Cavalcade (6458460). 12.00 Golf: Inside the PGA Tour (3516151). 12.30 Golf: Inside the PGA Tour (1954286). 1.00 The Rugby Club (1942441). 2.00 Asian Golf Show (7551593). 3.00 Ice Hockey (65147). 6.30 Ice Hockey - Live (134712). 9.00 Rugby Union Update (83083). 11.00-1.30am Ice Hockey (988460).

SKY BOX OFFICE
12.00midnight: Boxing: Judgement Night Part 2 - Live (9039107).
SKY SPORTS 3
12.00am UK Shift Sailing (5670254). 12.30 High Five (2334625). 1.00 World Motor Sport (8743460). 5.00 World Sport Special (3643806). 5.30 Golf: Kapalua International (15029151). 7.00 Live Golf: Kapalua International (3643806). 8.30 Spanish Football (3222008). 11.00 UK Shift Sailing (5048248). 11.30-12.00midnight: High Five (9996422).

UK TV
6.00am Revelations. 6.30 Looking for Love. 7.00 Spanish Archer. 7.30 Mind and Body. 8.00 Why Files. 8.30 Fashion. 9.00 Fate and Fortune. 9.30 Fashion. 10.00 Revelations. 10.30 Looking for Love. 11.00 Why Files. 11.30 Spanish Archer. 12.00 Golf. 1.00 Looking for Love. 1.30 Fate and Fortune. 2.00 Chequered Flag. 3.00 Pin Money. 4.00 Eric's Monster Sport Show. 5.30 Eric's Monster Sport Show. 6.00 Eric's Monster Sport Show. 6.30 Eric's Monster Sport Show. 7.00 Spanish Archer. 7.30

It's flimsy, faded – and the most precious item in the world

Charlie Bain

This rather tatty looking, stained piece of paper is arguably the most valuable object in the world. A rare Swedish stamp, nearly a century and a half old, it was sold for a record 2.9 million Swiss francs (£2.1m) at a public auction in Zurich yesterday.

The Treskilling Yellow, which is listed in the *Guinness Book of World Records* as the most valuable object of any type by weight, volume and density, has belonged successively to many of the world's top collectors since first going on the market in 1885. It was first sold to a Stockholm dealer for just 7 Swedish kroner (70p) that year by a schoolboy who discovered it among a pile of letters at his grandmother's house.

The sale eclipsed the record of \$1.9m (£890,000) for the same stamp in 1990 and was bought by an unidentified Stockholm-based dealer. It will be shown at a Thanksgiving weekend exhibition at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York later this month.

Auctioneer David Feldman who co-ordinated the sale said yesterday that the price went far beyond expectation and predicted that it would give the world stamp-collecting market a major boost.

"It will give a lot of confidence to people who have bought rare stamps," he said. "It's a very special moment in the history of philately."

Predictably, the battle was on in Zurich yesterday to identify

the mystery buyer who many believe is a Stockholm-based dealer.

Bogdan Stanculescu, a Romanian collector and stamp expert, estimated that only a handful of collectors would have the means to buy the Treskilling Yellow, adding that it was possible that the person who bought it wanted to keep it in Sweden.

Mr Feldman said he knew the identity of the collector but declined to identify him. "I have met him before, but I did not know he was going to bid," he added.

Hans Lernerstam, the Stockholm dealer who bought the stamp for the private client, said he would have been prepared to pay even more for it. "I am very proud to have the honour to purchase the most valuable item in the world," he said.

The Treskilling stamp is the only yellow version of an 1855 three-shilling issue, which is Sweden's first postage stamp. Although in appearance it is in fact a dull, orangey hue, the others that have survived are green, and for many years yesterday's stamp was believed to be a fake. Scientific tests in the 1970s proved otherwise.

It has held the single stamp record in successive sales since 1984, and its latest owner, Sven-Olof Karlsson of Sweden, decided to sell rather than make final payments on the purchase he made six years ago.

Yesterday's sale took about four minutes, with some 16 bids coming in from more than half a dozen would-be buyers,



Stamp of distinction: Treskilling Yellow – the most valuable item in the world by weight, volume and density

including one by telephone from Malaysia.

The stamp was discovered by Swedish schoolboy George Backman in 1885. During a Christmas visit to his grandmother, 14-year-old George asked her to open a chest of drawers so that he could search for letters, hoping to find some old stamps to sell. He took the yellow stamp and some others to a dealer in Stockholm who agreed to buy it for Skr7.

Recalling the occasion in later years, Mr Backman said: "I dared to ask him whether I was to receive seven crowns for the stamp, whereupon he answered 'I shall pay that much all the same'." Shortly after completing the transaction, Mr Backman discovered that the dealer had already been offered 300 crowns for the rarity, but had declined to part with it, saying: "It will someday reach a very high price."

Stars of the stamp world

The Mauritius "Bordeaux Cover" – a letter sent to wine merchants in 1847 with the 1 penny and 2 penny first issues of Mauritius – which was bought for £2.6m in less than a minute at an auction in Zurich in 1993.

A British Penny Black, sold on an addressed envelope, went for £1.3m because the

letter had been sent four days before the stamp's official date of issue, 6 May 1840.

A one-cent British Guyana stamp dating from 1856. The owner of one of the only two known examples of the "British Guyana 1 cent" bought the other for about £30,000 and then burnt it – thereby doubling the value of the surviving

significant shorts

Yeltsin moved to Kremlin hospital

Recovering from his quintuple bypass faster than expected, President Boris Yeltsin yesterday moved into a hospital where he has a suite of offices and asked for some classical music.

The Russian leader, 65, has been pushing doctors for days to move him to the Kremlin hospital, which has presidential offices and a more homely atmosphere.

Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin said no one could talk him out of it: "The president's health will improve very fast now," he predicted after Yeltsin left the Moscow Cardiological Centre, where he underwent surgery on Tuesday. AP – Moscow

Turkey orders smoking clampdown

Parliament in Turkey, a country of dedicated smokers, has adopted a law banning smoking in most public places and the sale of cigarettes to children.

Public transport, sports centres and locations providing health, education and cultural services are to be smoke-free and anyone caught selling tobacco to under-18s will be fined 10m Turkish lira (£64). The law will also curb cigarette advertising and make health warnings on tobacco packs compulsory. AP – Ankara

Swiss soldiers reprimanded

Outraged farmers and railway officials yesterday demanded that the Swiss government rein in the army on after officers admitted soldiers had practised their skills subduing unruly farmers and striking rail workers. Last week, the army also admitted to staging a manoeuvre in which tanks warded off a hypothetical invasion from neighbouring Italy's secessionist Piamonte movement. Reuters – Bern

US army officer on rape charge

The US army has brought charges of rape and sexual harassment against a captain and two drill sergeants at the Army Ordnance Center in Maryland.

The Pentagon said it had identified more than a dozen victims, all female recruits in their second eight weeks of military training.

"All of us are deeply troubled by the allegations of sexual misconduct and rape," said Gen. Dennis Reimer, Army chief of staff at a Pentagon news conference. AP – Washington

Hell's Angels move on

The Hells Angels have abandoned their downtown Copenhagen headquarters, which was hit by a deadly anti-tank grenade last month, city officials said yesterday.

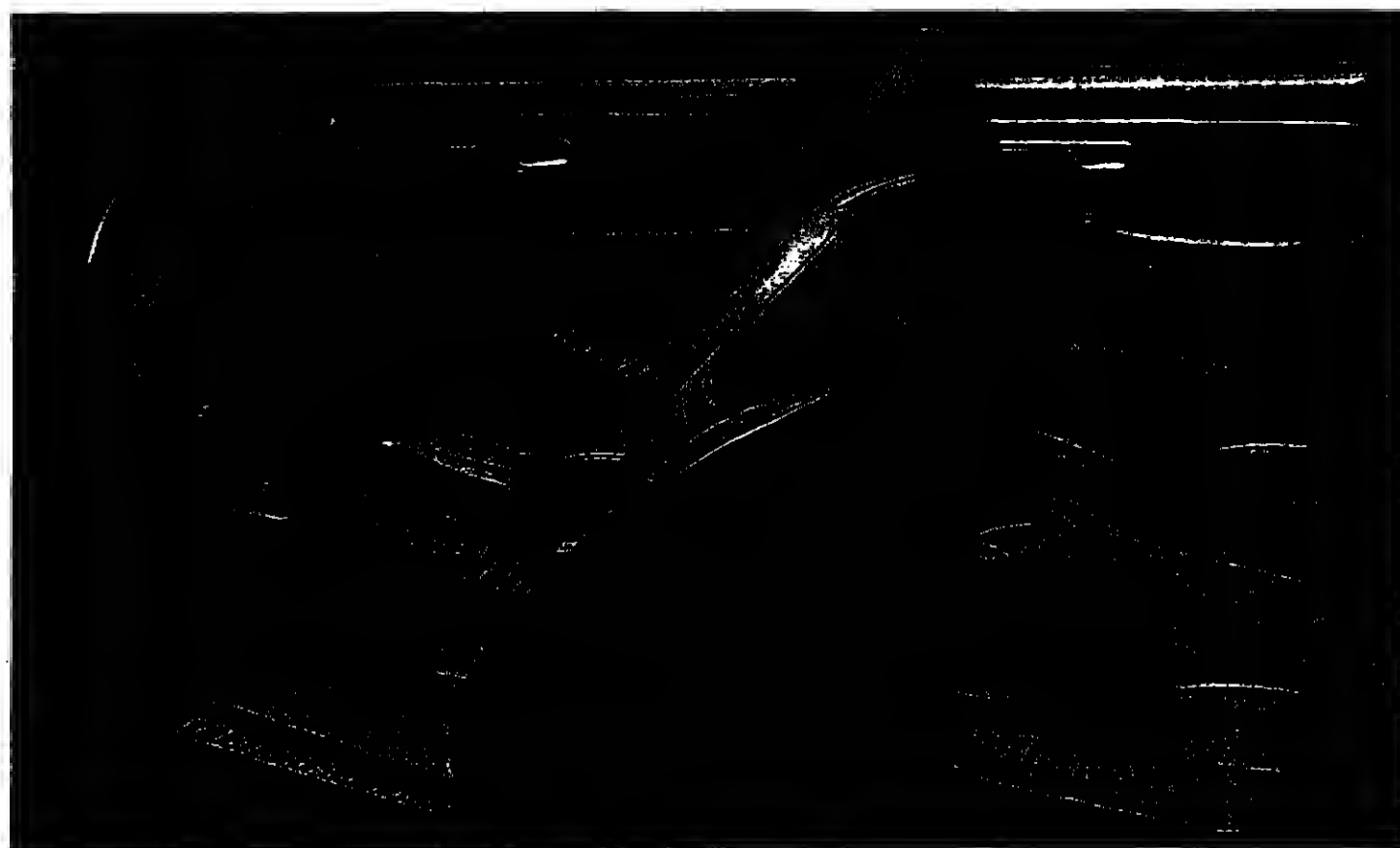
The bikers are at the centre of a low-level guerrilla war being waged among motorcycle gang members across Scandinavia and Finland. Last month, a grenade slammed into the Copenhagen headquarters, killing two people and injuring 19 others, during an annual beer bash. AP – Copenhagen

Spain's jobless toll increases

Joblessness in Spain rose to 14.08 percent in October, from 13.82 percent in September, the Ministry of Labour said yesterday.

The number of Spaniards registered as out of work rose by 40,099 people, to a rounded 2.23 million at the end of October. AP – Madrid

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obituaries / gazette

Patrick Johnson

Patrick Johnson was someone who used to be described approvingly as an "all-rounder". He was a rowing blue at Oxford, and began a distinguished scientific career there as a physicist. He was a Fellow and Tutor at Magdalen College for 20 years, interrupted by his wartime service in Operations, for which he was appointed OBE. He was also an experienced yachtsman, a trained pilot and a first-class shot.

His whole life might have been rather different. He went to Dartmouth in 1917 at the age of 13, but when the war was over and the Royal Navy being cut back his father urged him to leave and go to Tonbridge School instead. From there, he went up to Oxford and read physics at Magdalen.

He had learned to row at Tonbridge, and rowed in the Magdalen First Eight for three years. In those days, Magdalen had been amongst the three top crews on the river for 50 years, a record unbeaten by any other college. Johnson stroked the 1926 crew when they regained second position, and was Captain in his final year. He was also in the university boat that year, but it was in the middle of a disastrous period in Oxford rowing when Cambridge won every race except one for 18 years.

He spent a postgraduate year at the Sorbonne before returning to Oxford in 1928 where he was appointed a Fellow and Tutor at Magdalen, and University Lecturer in Physics. At that time there was rivalry within the department headed by Professor John Townsend, between the theoretical physicists in the Clarendon Laboratory and the experimentalists in the Electrical Laboratory. A course of lectures on "High Vacuum Physics", advertised by the latter, is said to have been countered by another on "Higher Vacuum Physics" by the former. As an electrician, one of Johnson's interests at that time was the development of electro-magnetism.

He was a tutor for almost 20 years at Magdalen before, after the Second World War, well remembered, not only by his pupils but by many undergraduates. He was the only Fellow of the college this century to have been a rowing blue and was an energetic and legendary supporter of the Boat Club. He coached many good Magdalen crews through the 1930s, and also coached the Oxford crew in 1933.

The Magdalen SCR at that time had many formidable members. Johnson played golf with Harry Weldon, sailed with John Morris, and lived in the company of Fellow bachelors like C.S. Lewis and Bruce McFarlane. His best-known pupil and closest friend was James Griffiths, lifelong Fellow and later President of Magdalen; they were regulars at the Lamb and Flag together and at the back bar of the King's Arms.

Despite Dartmouth, and flying Bristol Fighters with the University Air Squadron, when the Second World War came Johnson was in the Army. He worked initially on radar operations, and later served as Deputy Scientific Adviser to Field Marshal Montgomery in 21st Army Group.

After the war, Johnson returned to Magdalen, and was Vice-President in 1946-47. To the surprise of many, he then accepted the appointment of Director of Studies at RAF College, Cranwell, where he remained until 1952. He told a friend at the time that after five years away from Oxford he found the prospect of keeping pace with the teaching of physics somewhat daunting and worried that he might not be able to offer his students the support they needed. He had always been known more for his dedicated teaching than for his own scientific research.

His next appointment was in India, where he was head of the Institute of Armament Studies in Poona from 1952 to 1955. He returned to London to become Scientific Adviser to the Army Council, and ended his scientific career as Assistant Scientific Adviser to SHAPE. Far from retirement, he then spent eight years with the Educational Foundation for Visual Aids as Head of their Experimental Development Unit, from 1962 to 1970.

His many friends at Oxford will remember him as an energetic and practical man; often gruff but always warmhearted; critical but incisive; and modest but determined in all he did. Academic pressures today would make it difficult for an all-rounder like Pat Johnson to win a Fellowship and Lectureship at Oxford, but the contribution which he made in the first half of a long and busy life kept his name alive there for another 50 years, during which he remained, as all had known him, an avuncular bachelor.

Peter Fullerton

Patrick Johnson, physicist: born 24 May 1904; Fellow and Lecturer in Natural Science, Magdalen College, Oxford 1928-47; Dean 1934-38; Vice-President 1946-47; OBE 1945; Director of Studies, RAF College, Cranwell 1947-52; Dean, Institute of Armament Studies, India 1952-55; Scientific Adviser to the Army Council 1955-58; Assistant Scientific Adviser, SHAPE 1958-62; Head of Experimental Development Unit, Educational Foundation for Visual Aids 1962-70; died London 29 October 1996.

David Sisman

Before the microphone changed all our lives, revolutionising the way we seek and receive information, there was another, quieter, revolution - in the world of reference books.

David Sisman was one of the small group of pioneers who, in the 1950s and early 1960s, changed the look of an entire genre - atlases, gardening books, DIY books, cookbooks, nature books, guidebooks. Where previously there had been solid text, peppered with black-and-white line drawings and perhaps a few colour plates tipped in, reference books suddenly came alive. Full colour photographs and diagrams conveyed to millions of readers what they needed to know on any subject from plate tectonics to pruning an apple tree.

Sisman had an exceptional eye for design, a rare talent for friendship, a deep interest in other people and a healthy lack of concern for money - either for making it or for holding on to it. After wartime and post-war service in the Royal Navy and a brief spell in advertising he joined the London office of *Reader's Digest* in 1953 and was promptly seconded to their fledgling Italian office, to take charge of art and design. To

David Sisman and his wife Marjorie, coming from a country still in the grip of austerity, Italy was a revelation - a land of sunshine, and no rationing. Equally, David was a revelation to the Italians. They had been expecting a stiff, reserved English naval officer. What they got was an artist and designer who could turn any deadline into a drama, and could match the best of them, historians for their historicism. The promotion copywriter in Milan found that the best way to get David Sisman to deliver material on time was to burst into tears. Then there would be apologies, flowers, chocolates - and a winning batch of designs. The Italians were so impressed that they gave Sisman a nickname: "the prima donna".

After four years in Italy, Sisman swapped jobs with his London counterpart and became art director for *Reader's Digest* in Britain. This meant visits to the parent company in the United States. On one such trip, he stepped into an elevator in New York to find the only other occupant was a smartly dressed woman who seemed to have something to do with *Reader's Digest*. By the time they reached the 16th floor, Sisman

had so captivated her that she invited him to dinner. She was Lila Acheson Wallace, co-founder and co-publisher, with her husband DeWitt Wallace, of *Reader's Digest*. David Sisman was to become their favourite Englishman, and to spend many happy years at the *Digest*, spotting and encouraging young talent.

In his youth he had run away to join the Merchant Navy, volunteering for the Royal Navy in 1942. Twice he was aboard ships that were sunk by enemy action. On the second occasion, when HMS *Egret* was bombed off Cape Finisterre in August 1943, only 27 survived out of a crew of 231. Some of the younger sailors, thrown into a heavy sea, were beginning to despair, and to give up the fight. But Sisman, despite his hands being badly burnt, swam from man to man, keeping their spirits up and giving more than one young sailor the will to hang on until help arrived. Later, he volunteered for submarines and became a navigation officer on patrol in the Atlantic. He finished the war with a DSC, but always insisted that "everybody who was in the war got a medal".

A love of the sea stayed with Sisman all his life. He was a keen member of the British Sub Aqua Club, editing and illustrating their official *Diver's Manual*. He was the editor of *The Professional Diver's Handbook* (1982) and co-wrote, with Peter Dick, *Underwater Diving* (1985). He explored many wrecks off the coast of Wales and the South-West, where his training in navigation made him a valued member of any diving team. He could read tide tables, and predict a squall just by looking up at the sky. "I really must give up diving," he would say, turned 70 and the survivor of two strokes. But everybody knew he didn't mean it. He continued helping the

BSAC with training courses and lectures that combined hard, practical information with wit and brilliant illustrations. Right up to the time of his final, catastrophic stroke in 1996, Sisman stayed young by living life to the full. Calligraphy, classes in life drawing, slate engraving, flying - all of these he took up and mastered. Yet he still found time to set female hearts a-flutter, working for the charity *Contact* and looking after what he called "my old ladies".

After his last stroke, David Sisman was taken into the Royal Star and Garter Home for Disabled Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen at Richmond, Surrey. He was divorced in 1967, but he remained a good friend of his former wife, to the extent of going on holiday with Marjorie and her new husband. He leaves a son, the writer Adam Sisman, a daughter, the designer Lucy Sisman, and the partner and companion of his later years, Annie O'Dell.

Robin Hooley

David Sisman, designer: born Hendon 4 February 1920; married 1948 Marjorie Parker (one son, one daughter; marriage dissolved 1977); died Richmond, Surrey 24 October 1996.

Ted Daffan

In 1970, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the evolution of the country song, Theron Eugene "Ted" Daffan was elected a charter member of the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame.

Several of his songs became milestones: "Truck Drivers Blues", which was a hit for Cliff Bruner and his Texas Wanderers in 1939, is usually cited as the first trucking song, whilst "Worried Mind", co-written with the future Governor of Louisiana Jimmie Davis, was an important record in the career of the singing cowboy, Roy Rogers.

Perhaps his most enduring number, however, has been "Born To Lose". A bleak study of the country boy coming to terms with life in the city, Daffan hit upon its title during a game of poker with his accordion player and published it using the pseudonym Frankie Brown. His own version, produced by Columbia's British-born A&R man "Uncle" Art Satherley and featuring a smooth steel guitar from Daffan and the baritone of Leon Seago, was a Stateside hit in 1948. It has since been covered numerous times, notably by Ray Charles on his landmark

Paul Waddy

Theron Eugene Daffan (Ted Daffan), musician and songwriter: born Beauregard, Louisiana 21 September 1912; married; died Houston, Texas 6 October 1996.

David Sisman

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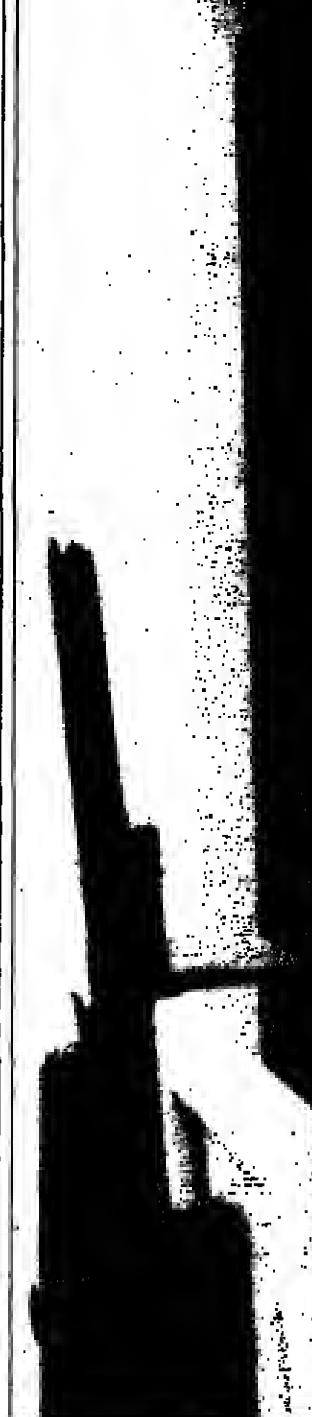
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Benayoun: Surrealist turned film critic

Robert Benayoun

One of the inexplicable mysteries of French life is the exorbitant enthusiasm for the person and the movies of Jerry Lewis. Robert Benayoun, a highly respected literary and film critic, was one of his most ardent (yet clear-headed) admirers, and wrote an entertaining book about his hero, *Bonjour Mr Lewis* (revised and enlarged in 1989).

This work is a classic example of French intellectuality, when the critical faculty is expressed in the form of a declaration of love and an aesthetic manifesto. Jerry Lewis is the sort of comedian who makes sensitive souls shrink. He can ensure total embarrassment, and that is what fascinates Robert Benayoun. Lewis's infantile excesses and tasteless lewdnesses are a kind of blundering frankness in which Benayoun sees a violent affirmation of the truth of life.

His book is a series of portraits with lavish interviews that merge into an overwhelmingly grotesque megalomaniac megalomania star down always on the verge of tears, in the most ludicrous yet banal situations, with a kind of savage beauty and awesome courage in his wildest burlesque routines. Benayoun sees in this monster the archaic figure of a primitive jester, a Pan whose irreverence appeals to the infant buried deep inside us all, and that longs to erupt irrationally, as Jerry Lewis so often does, into our primly restrictive adult world.

But how did a young Moroccan come to gain such deep insights into the dubious appeal of Jerry Lewis? Perhaps ancestral memories of holy fools and the liberating logic of figures like the Incredible Mulla Nasrudin, immortalised for us in the delightful books of Idries Shah, put Robert Benayoun on the right track, which led straight to post-war Surrealism. He was a disciple of André Breton, revered his writings and joined the Surrealist movement in Paris in 1948. He was also crazy about the movies, and determined to put his master's the-

James Kirkup

Robert Benayoun, critic and film director: born Pori-Lyautey, Morocco 1926; died Paris 20 October 1996.

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Daffan: 'Born To Lose'

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From Bleak House to Cromwell Street

Are the children of Gloucestershire cursed? There were times during the West trial when such extreme language seemed apt. The county social services department commissioned a study of the number and whereabouts of children in its care. Why? Because runaways from children's homes had provided 25 Cromwell Street with all too many of its young visitors. An early draft of the report was leaked yesterday, disclosing a dark and extraordinary well of official ignorance into which a number of children seemed to have fallen. Some children in the authority's care have just gone missing and it is unclear at this stage whether the council kept the police fully informed. Worse, portions of the authority's own care records seem to have gone AWOL.

Of course, Gloucestershire may be a freak. Errors may have crept into the assessment. It could yet be that the entire phenomenon is a product of missing information rather than missing children. As social services directors were naturally keen to point out, it is too early to try to extrapolate the Gloucestershire findings to other social services departments. It must remain speculation whether significant numbers of children are missing – all the more reason why a better national database for the missing and fuller co-operation between the social agencies and police are urgently needed. Yet the Gloucestershire report would be so

much easier to qualify or hold at a distance if we could be more confident of social services management. The Audit Commission has recently started to team up with the Department of Health's own social services inspectors; their co-operation gives some hope of better future management. Yet this latest report comes hard on the heels of the Neave case and its disclosure of how a child – a child well known to Cambridgeshire social workers and care assistants, a child logged many times by the system – could still "disappear". Before that was the Clwyd case, in which we are proud to have played some role in disclosure. There, children disappeared into an archipelago of council-run homes where abuse went unchecked. The circumstances of each of these cases were different, but they had a common thread in the failures of social services' information about vulnerable people.

We should not panic. "Community care" is the fashion of the day, but real communities are all too ready to slough off their share of the social burden to officialdom – to local authorities and volunteers, paying not the slightest attention to their training, pay, mission or management. Social workers are regularly vilified yet are still expected to behave with professional dedication.

These cases raise questions not about struggling professionals but about the basics of child care. Not for the first time since the Seebohm



reforms of the early Seventies, it needs to be asked whether social services are working effectively when, bureaucratically speaking, children keep getting lost. We count ourselves friends of the principle of local self-government, but are counties and districts really the best machines to deliver care and protection to vulnerable children? Local government is about diversity yet each child has an equal entitlement to care and support.

But contemplating the possible fate of some of these missing Gloucestershire children, dismay grows and with it a churning resentment at some of the hypocrisies of our age. Politicians and some newspapers are mounting the beginnings of an American-style campaign against abortion and defending the rights of the unborn. At the same time, they are yelling against "bureaucrats", care workers and child tearaways. What of the rights of the born, of discarded children who are beaten or neglected, or indeed demonised, by those same comfortable moralisers? The unruly pupils of Manton and The Ridings are individually pilloried – no trial, no due process, no rights. A dull disapproval presses down on them. And, beyond the reach of journalism or cameras, other forgotten children merely "go missing".

Much fine rhetoric has been spent recently on defence of family values. Fine – we agree. But too often it has been a one-sided white-

wash that ignores the cruelty, neglect and sheer incompetence of many parents and the resulting hell that "family life" then becomes. The agencies created to pick up the pieces of family dysfunction are then condemned as if they were responsible. Genuine efforts to measure and chart physical and mental abuse of children are laughed at as exaggerations. Newspaper columnists paint idyllic pictures of families, innocent of fact and figure. Too much commentary refuses to confront the daily dilemma of those who ask to provide social services – as if families operated according to some computer program which rings a bell when an error of upbringing is committed.

Social services directors have a right to demand fair criticism, untainted by passing media hysteria. But they have obligations, too – like keeping immaculate records of referrals and cases (did Gloucestershire ever hear of information technology?), and like ensuring that they liaise, regularly and intimately, with police over those children who have, for one reason or another, escaped the net of care they are supposed to provide. There has been too much generalised outrage at acts of crime and too little careful thought about the cost of providing better care and closer knowledge of those lost children, pushed from homes and passed casually into the wardship of disgraced officialdom. There are parts of our country that Charles Dickens would recognise.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Reach out into an alienated society and find those missing voters

Sir: Further to Ian Burrell's valuable report "Britain's missing 2 million voters" (7 November) may I add that one reason why we have so many people missing is that our creaking system of electoral registration is half a century out of date. It has failed to keep up with increasing social mobility as people move around the country with their jobs or by getting on their bikes to look for jobs. We have become an increasingly rootless society with large pockets of unemployment, deprivation and alienation. We need a system that actively encourages people to register for the vote.

Solutions are not complex or

expensive. First, we need a system of rolling registration. This is favoured by many electoral registration officers. With suitable safeguards, it allows people to register to vote where they live and when they live there. It is claimed that it might cost £4m to introduce. But what price democracy?

The Government spends very little on advertising to boost electoral registration. In the current year, they are only spending £685,000. Yet they are happy to spend many more millions promoting privatisation.

Likewise the Government should ensure that electoral registration officers have become an

underfunded Cinderella service. They are absolutely professional and are doing their very best but within great constraints.

Many thousands of homeless people should be allowed to register where they reside, even if this is not the bricks and mortar most of us have. Access to voting and polling stations for disabled people should be increased. At the last election nearly 90 per cent of polling stations were inaccessible to disabled people.

From the Great Reform Act of 1832 to various acts of emancipation in 1867, 1884, 1918, 1928, 1948 and 1969, which gradually expanded the

franchise, governments of all hues have been forced to recognise the necessity of protecting and expanding the right to vote. In recent years, we have shipped. It is a disgrace which any decent government would remedy as an immediate priority. HARRY BARNES MP (Derbyshire North East, Lab) House of Commons London SW1

Sir: I read your report suggesting that Rock the Vote had "struggled to get young people to register to vote". Moments later I walked into my office to find 4,000 of our voter

registration cards arriving through the post. A good day, maybe, but not untypical of the response we have been getting to the cards we are distributing. Our campaign at the moment is low-key and aimed at getting young people to register. This we are doing in thousands. The Ministry of Sound's campaign is not about registration, it is about encouraging people to use their vote. This we will be doing much closer to the election campaign itself, when we believe it will be more effective. CHARLES STEWART SMITH Executive Director, Rock the Vote London EC4

Ruinous addiction to hi-tech arms

Sir: Polly Toynbee ("the cost of being Europe's squaddies" 6 November) is right: we are indeed military "hardware addicts on a wild spending spree". And further ahead there is no end to the spree.

It will go on after the multi-billion Eurofighter and the Tomahawk missiles (which weren't so good in September against Iraq), and all the rest of the computer-rich gear that grows ever more vulnerable to the electronic warfare gear that we and others are so enthusiastically developing against it. Here are today's arms races: one firm's weaponry against other firms' weaponry.

There is the expansion of Nato that the Government supports, even the immediate cost of which neither FMG nor Nato have yet estimated. The Americans expect the Europeans to pay perhaps 80 per cent. This would be in the hundreds of billions range according to US estimates. The longer term cost of reacting to Russia's reaction is ignored.

Then there is the whole Ballistic Missile Defence boondoggle, which HMG is sitting on three confidential reports about. Although useless – unmarked vans are far better launchers than ballistic missiles for weapons of mass destruction – and put us under automated, computer-driven (therefore vulnerable), space-based, US command, to engage in what is called "pre-emptive counter-



Sir: In this season of returning things to Scotland, it might also be appropriate to dispatch there the statue in Whitehall of Field Marshal Haig. No Scotsman can have slaughtered more Englishmen. Photograph: Barney Hinde

proliferation". The United States military seems to be hoping for a kind of global hegemony, and the last Congress was giving them more money than they asked for while continuing to default on UN and WHO dues.

It looks as if Mr Clarke has given several blank cheques to Mr Forth, to be presented to the taxpayer only after the election. WAYLAND KENNET (Leamington Spa) ELIZABETH YOUNG House of Lords

Sir: It would be wonderful to think that we could solve this country's social problems by robbing Peter to pay Paul and raiding the defence budget to throw money at social programmes, as Polly Toynbee suggests.

However, a national defence capability that has taken years to develop and would take decades to regenerate must not be thrown away because no party has the courage to raise taxes to pay for the social upkeep of the nation. There seems to be an

assumption that there will never be another war and all purchases of military equipment not designed for peacekeeping are unnecessary.

But what did we see, scant months after the end of the Cold War? A conflict involving the large-scale use of fighter jets, main battle tanks and battle helicopters, the three types of equipment the article ridicules the Government for buying. CONOR O'NEILL London SW14

Half Caesareans are unnecessary

Sir: I have every sympathy for Gillian Morris-Kay (letters, 7 November) who lost her first child at birth, but I suspect that this tragic stillbirth has coloured her reaction to Sheila Kitzinger's article on how to avoid a Caesarean section (CS) (Magazine, 2 November). This was hardly a polemic but an excellent summary of the steps, backed by good research evidence, that women can take to avoid an unnecessary operation.

The rate of CS was estimated by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists to be 15 per cent in England in 1993, whilst in Scotland and Wales the rates are higher. In 1978, when the US rate of CS rose to 15 per cent it was recognised that a public health problem existed and a task force was set up to examine this. It took another 15 years before the rate stopped rising, peaking at 24.8 per cent, and in 1994 it had fallen to 23.6 per cent. The rate has risen more slowly in the UK but is over 15 per cent now. I estimate that half those operations are unnecessary and many could be avoided by following the excellent advice given by Sheila Kitzinger.

WENDY SAVAGE FRCOG London N1

Windfall squalls

Sir: Your reports on Labour and the windfall tax become more and more bizarre. You report (7 November) that "the Clinton administration has approached Tony Blair's office to express concern about a windfall tax being imposed on US utilities that have acquired British regional electricity companies in the last 18 months". This is untrue. You also report that "President Clinton is thought to have raised the matter with Mr Blair when the Labour leader visited Washington earlier this year". This is untrue as well.

In addition, whatever wishful thinking you or Powergen want to indulge in, my letter in Tuesday's Independent changes Labour's position not one jot. ALASTAIR CAMPBELL Press Secretary to Tony Blair House of Commons London SW1

Doesn't arise

Sir: The essential ingredient missing from your report on guilt, pleasure and health (7 November) is an indication of who really paid for the research. Associates for Research into the Science of Enjoyment (Arise) are funded by booze, cigarette and chocolate manufacturers. I am sure that the scientific integrity of their study was in no way compromised by this connection, but I do notice that your report is riddled off with a claim from Arise's spokesperson on the stress-reducing properties of booze, cigarettes and chocolate. ROBERT EAGLE London W4

LETTER from THE EDITOR

There has probably been no piece carried in *The Independent* under my editorship which will arouse as much anger as Richard D North's critical article yesterday on Ken Saro-Wiwa, the Nigerian dissident who was hanged a year ago. As I write, the phone calls and faxes have not started, but they will come.

Members of staff are upset about it, too. Not unnaturally, in the eyes of liberals, Saro-Wiwa is, along with Mandela and a few others, the nearest we have to a modern secular saint. He took on Shell – and this paper has been critical of multinationals. He was championed by Greenpeace – and we have favourably reported much that Greenpeace do. He was clearly a brave man who died for his beliefs – and that compels respect.

He is, in so many ways, our kind of hero. To all this, I have only one answer – if *The Independent* ceases to be a place where serious, counter-intuitive and critical journalism can be heard, then as a newspaper, it becomes a pointless waste of trees.

So how did that other thing happen? How did it come about, I mean, that we spent such a chunk of the week talking about Tony Blair's hair? It got so bad, you may recall, that he had to issue a joke press release claiming that he was going bald to try to stifle arguments about whether he had changed his hairstyle to woo female voters. Hurtful stuff.

That press release bore the fingerprints of Alastair Campbell, Blair's press officer, who was by turns outraged and helpless with laughter as the hair story took off. This week's story is, I suppose, the Labour equivalent of the story a few years ago about John Major tucking his shirt into his underpants – I can't remember where that came from.

Like Blair, I am only slightly thinning and couldn't care less. The hour or so spent upside down each day, vigorously rubbing Marmite and kerosene into my scalp is purely recreational.

Andrew Marr

QUOTE UNQUOTE

It's pointless talking to drunks because you're not talking to a human being, you're talking to a bloody bottle – Sir James (Jimmy) Savile. Even at his dizzy height of popularity, I knew that the clock would strike 12 and I'd be seen for what I was: unworthy, unattractive, unaccomplished – The Duchess of York to *"Hello"* magazine. It's the spiral of life. You do have to know a bit about science. Life is a spiral – like the hair on a baby's head or in the galaxies – Vanessa Redgrave, actress, describing one of her doodles which was up for auction at Sotheby's. Got to be off. Pity we have got no time for rumpy-pumpy – Lord Hesley, Labour peer, ending an interview he gave to a woman reporter. My problem is not changing my hair. It's keeping it – Tony Blair. He smiles too much, he talks too much, his eyes are glassy, his dentistry is chaotic – Germaine Greer on Tony Blair. I failed the driving test the first time. I wore a shorter skirt the second time – Rory Bremner. I've known Nick for years. But when I am in Waitrose, I cannot hold my head up as a Chelsea Conservative. I fear he has to go – female member of the Kensington and Chelsea Conservative Association, which has refused to endorse its MP Sir Nicholas Scott. I hope it will be out in time for the abolition – John Wells, who is writing a book on the history of the House of Lords.

Lib Dems fight Murdoch hegemony

Sir: Polly Toynbee (article, 4 November) and Angela Eagle (letter, 6 November) have drawn attention to the importance of a single digital set-top box. At the Commons committee stage of the recent Broadcasting Bill, Robert MacLennan and Roger Gale tabled an amendment intended to ensure that all digital set-top boxes would be compatible. The Minister promised to return at the report stage with proposals to bring about a common set-top box.

At the report stage the Government, Labour and the Liberal Democrats all tabled amendments to allow the public to purchase a single set-top box. The Liberal Democrat amendment differed in that it avoided the potential pitfall that market dominance might be achieved before a common standard was agreed. BSkyB now looks set to attain that dominance.

It is hard to avoid the suspicion that fear of the Murdoch media empire lies at the heart of both the Government's and Labour's reluctance to take a strong stand on this issue. The Liberal Democrats will continue to press for a common set-top box. Lord McNALLY Lord THOMSON OF MONIFIETH Liberal Democrat Broadcasting Spokesman House of Lords

How long before a plane crashes on London?

Sir: I must thank Christian Wolmar ("How safe is your plane?", 4 November). The world's civil aviation industry must wonder at their luck in that no flight on take-off or landing has crashed disastrously on to a built-up area.

Flight 800 and the Persian plane landed in the sea, the 1972 Statens crash was in open land and reservoirs and an American jet not long ago took off ice-bound and landed in a river.

One day a large aircraft will break up in mid-air and land on to a conurbation, or will crash land on to it, and the chances are that it will be London, given the absurd location of Heathrow. Our prevailing winds are from the south-west, which means that the landing approach is over the London conurbation, often over the city itself. (I have been on a KLM flight when the pilot deliberately banked over Westminster to afford a night time aerial view for those of us on the starboard side).

When not from that direction, our winds come mostly from the east – hence the layout of Heathrow's two main runways. On easterlies, as when the wind is light, the 747s lumber up into the air over my house or over Brentford. I often speculate on the

point at which the results of a catastrophic break-up would be carried by their own momentum beyond my house.

It will only stop once the worst has happened. Terminal 5 will, of course, bring that day nearer. CH STANDFIELD London W7

Sir: Last week a parliamentary Select Committee examined air traffic control and received yet further evidence about the risks of routing aircraft over London and other cities.

The committee received a copy of the initial report of the US White House Commission on Aviation Safety and Security which demonstrated that TWA800 had awoken the USA to the subject. The dreadful reality is that nobody is taking personal or corporate responsibility for the public safety consequences of increasing air traffic over London. It is simply not in anyone's interest to do so because the risks and liabilities are too great. The UK urgently needs a Commission on Aviation Safety and Security too. GORDON GLASS Director 2020 Vision Ltd Bath

Thoughtless invasion of our woodlands

Sir: If indeed woodland is owned by the Forestry Commission, limited public access to land held in the public's name seems reasonable (letter, 4 November). However, many woodlands are not so owned: they are held on long leases from the real owners often on tiny rents (eg 10p per acre per year).

Often outsiders have been given shooting rights over these woods with no reference to the actual owners, and members of the public have brought their dogs, radios, motorbikes, guns, poachers, litter and horses to what might be seen as otherwise privately cultivated.

The long-term side-effects of commercial afforestation are severe: the acidification of soils and springs affects flora and fauna. Most of us want to return this land to its natural state of mixed deciduous woods with heathland stretches, to conserve it for generations to come. The "right to roam" is a very questionable notion proffered by those who refuse to recognise some basic facts – that land is not primarily for the occasional recreation of casual users who have no responsibility for its care and upkeep. L GREGORY Norwich

the saturday story

Between faith and fanaticism



Beheadings, amputations, women as subservient citizens ... these are the manifestations of Islam today. But, asks Robert Fisk, who are we in the irreligious west to judge?

We were on the train to Cambridge when Martin Buckley told me that the BBC were worried about the title of our programme. "They think it might upset Muslims," he said. My title reflected a certain amount of irritation. I had spent so many weeks over the past few years cataloguing scores of "Islamic" punishments in the Arab Gulf, of head choppings and amputations and lashings - of young women as well as men - that I had wanted to call the programme "God the Most Merciful?" It was the question mark that bothered the BBC, of course. Buckley - a man of infinite politeness and Job-like patience - had told the *Radio Times* that he would have a new title by the time our train arrived for our appointment with Tareef Khalidi; the magazine's deadline fell in just 45 minutes.

I told Buckley we should ask Khalidi if he thought my title so insulting. And when we arrived at his home, opposite King's College Chapel, Khalidi, a good-natured bear of a man whose historical scholarship is legendary among his students in Beirut, gave a grimace of displeasure. Well, I said, think of a new title for us, Tareef. "How can I do that, Roberto?" he asked, arms raised above his head. "I've only just arrived here from Lebanon - I'm between two worlds." And "Between Two Worlds" was what we called our programme.

I had not been keen on the project. I dislike theological

debate and, after more than 20 years in the Middle East, nursed a certain deeply felt anxiety about the Muslim religion. I have read the Koran but have never been able to shake off the suspicion that Islam allows - if not insists - on a second-class role for women, that its God permits the harshest of punishments, that the Islamic world never experienced a humanist Renaissance as Christian Europe did in the 16th century and had thus fallen "behind" the modern liberal world that we like to think of as "the West".

Having watched the West's iniquities - and its dangerous, warlike technology - visited upon Muslims of a dozen countries, I could well understand why they should fear or hate us. But I have no reason to fear or hate them. On the battlefields of the Levant and the Gulf, Muslims have several times saved my life. So why did I feel so unhappy about making this programme?

Tareef was quite frank about the punishments. "The great tragedy of modern 'Islamism'," he said, "is that it has disregarded its own heritage and history, so that a great deal of the heritage of Islamic law and Islamic ethics is frequently ignored by modern practitioners of the religion. The modern lawyers don't know their history. And hence you have these brutal punishments, summarily issued, which lead to the hounding of books, verdicts of unbelief, the cutting off of hands in public ... I think at the base of it are nervous modern governments

increasingly tending to accommodate conservative and ignorant religious figures in order to pre-empt the fanatics. And it's a very sad state of affairs for a modern Muslim."

It surprised me how often Muslims were prepared to criticise the way in which their religion was practiced. Not Islam itself, of course, but the accretions that have been added to it, and the perverse logic that has caused, for instance, a Cairo court to order an Egyptian professor and his wife to divorce on the grounds that his academic work on the Koran proves him to be an apostate. Heba Ezzat, an Islamist writer and university teacher in Cairo, spoke bitterly of "the Kingdom of Silence" - Saudi Arabia - while accepting that both Muslims and Christians were responsible for the myth-making that followed the

Crusades. "This is a history that you can't just throw out of the window," she said. "Blood was shed. Through the centuries, both sides ... started making our own myths regarding the enemy ... people just don't forget."

Asking Muslims about their belief produced an odd effect on me. I would not hesitate to refer to them as Muslims. But I tried not to refer to "us" as Christians. When I referred to "our" fear of Islam or what "we" thought of the role of women in the Middle East, I referred to "the West" rather than to Christians. And although Kamal Abu Maged, an Islamist Egyptian lawyer, insisted that westerners still retained their faith in God, I understood the reason for my reticence. We self-doubting westerners, with our liberal consciences and our superb technology, do not have faith in God

in the way that Muslims have. As Heba Ezzat put it with near contempt when I anguished her with my remarks about women: "Christianity is not in the centre of your belief system any more."

I talked to Professor Nasr Abu Zaid, the Egyptian professor who, fearing for his life, fled Cairo after he was judged an apostate. Not wanting to give his address over the phone, we met in a café at a Dutch railway station. "In the plane, I was very angry," he said. "I told my wife: 'If I die in any place - in Holland, in Spain - just bury my body where I die. Don't think about taking my body back to Egypt ... Don't do this to yourself or to me. At the end, all the lands are the earth of God!'" Abu Maged - whom I interrupted when he tried to make a sly parallel

between Abu Zaid and Salman Rushdie - supported the court's ruling. "You get the impression that this man does not believe in the Koran and is attacking and questioning the authenticity of the Koran," he said. "The issue is not criticism of the Koran. It is the reverting from Islam to disbelief."

It seemed to me - and it still seems to me - that the emphasis on a woman's need to have less responsibility in outside life leads to the need to "protect" women and thus, by extension, to their secondary role in society. Who was I to make such objections, I was repeatedly asked, when I come from a society that allows women to toil in the frozen streets of Moscow, or undress for men in Manhattan strip joints? And why, Heba Ezzat asked me, should I trumpet the worth of western tech-

nology and the Muslim world's supposed backwardness? "You are talking to me about the death of God, the death of man ... about the unequal distribution of wealth in the world," she said indignantly above the roar of Cairo's traffic. Muslims had not kept their scientific discoveries secret in the 9th century. So why does the West prevent the Third World from learning the secrets of its technology today?

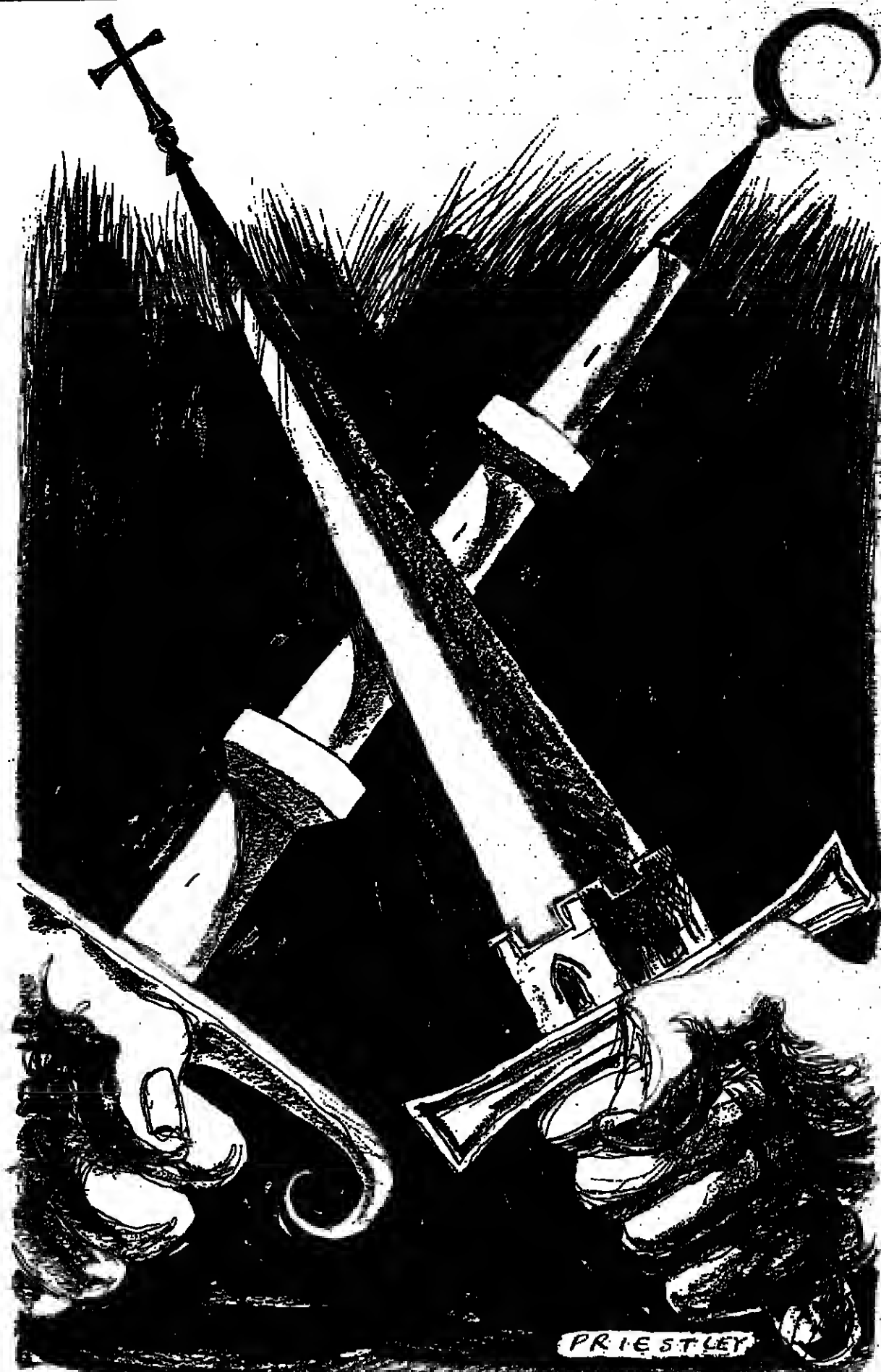
It was a Christian, Kamal Salibi - director of the Royal Institute of Inter-Faith Studies in Amman as well as being a distinguished Lebanese historian - who most vividly evoked the sense of betrayal felt by Muslims towards the West. The Egyptian and Ottoman rulers of the last century had tried to be like Europeans, he said. "They were trying to introduce western education, even to learn western music and western art."

The last Sultans played Mozart and tried to paint. "They thought, 'perhaps if we do so, they [the Europeans] will become our friends'. Instead of that, they became more and more their enemies. Mohamed Ali Pasha was trying to be European. Europeans came and suppressed him. The Ottomans, while they were trying to become like Europeans, were called the 'sick man of Europe' by the Europeans who began to make plans for the partition of their territory. And once they had succeeded in destroying the Ottoman empire, they never were happy to see any possibility of the re-emergence of a really orderly and progressive state in the area."

I was not encouraged by the making of *Between Two Worlds*. Towards the end of our conversation, I asked Khalidi, who lives in Beirut, how he could feel at home in the liberal, perhaps even Christian city of Cambridge, with King's College Chapel towering over his front window? "Take a look at those two nearest spires to us," he said. "What do they remind you of?" Minarets, I said. "Yes, exactly, Roberto. Exactly ..."

The belief in God was a constant. So was belief in the afterlife. And if Khalidi felt that paradise might resemble our "Christian" version of the place - an endless golf course with angels playing harps to bored men in white robes - Egyptians and Lebanese all expressed their faith in life after death, a prior appointment on Judgement Day but an eternal life in which the Koran's promise of rivers of honey and virgins should be seen only as metaphors. Only Salibi, the Christian, sounded bleaker. "The end is the end," he said. And of course, this is what "we" fear most.

'Between Two Worlds' will be broadcast at 5.45pm tomorrow on BBC Radio 3.



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It's strange touring the country because you begin to realise that people in different towns are very different in terms of their response. I normally kick the show off and introduce the first act by saying that I am doing a short tour, trying out new material and therefore have asked the tour promoter to book me into some real cack-holes so it doesn't matter if I die a death. An uproarious reaction to this statement normally presages a good lively show.

A good example was Scunthorpe, the other night. Cheers and cackles greeted the aforementioned line and I discovered an audience who were tipsy and enthusiastic. There was plenty of good-natured heckling and banter and people really seemed to enjoy themselves. The venue itself was aged, but the atmosphere was warm.

Huddersfield, a night later, was the opposite. The venue was a new, smart theatre, and for some moments I found myself thinking that the audience had come to see me in the mistaken belief that I was Joe Brown, the Fifties rocker. I'm sure everyone in Huddersfield isn't like this ... probably caught them on a bad night.

A good example of the painful way in which women indulge in the political arena popped up in former Yugoslavia, in the debate, if one can call it that, between Dana, the wife of Vuk Draskovic, and Mira, wife of Vuk Draskovic, opposition leader. Dana described Mira as "the bastard fruit of wild orgies in the forest", following a comment by Mira that she had the habits of a bandit and cattle

rustler. The words "mongoloid epileptic" were also bandied around. This does a disservice to women everywhere. Admittedly, it's a refreshing change to "The honourable gentleman, blah, blah," but ultimately it just reinforces in the male mind the idea that women are a bunch of silly, emotional creatures. I just want to point out that lots of us aren't, with the exception of the hairdressing brigade.

The Plain English Commission has awarded the Golden Rhubarb Trophy to Virginia Bottomley, who in her job at Heritage has produced a stunningly inaccessible document with such gems as "deemed to vitiate any proceedings and anywise notwithstanding". John Major, who talks like a minor Dickens character on acid, was a runner-up.

Perhaps this obscuring of the bare facts has something to do with an attempt to prevent Joe Public having any idea what is going on. On the other hand, it could just be civil servants who went to Oxford or Cambridge showing off. Anywise notwithstanding, I think it's the latter.

Surely it was only a matter of time before Fergie did an advert. We all know she's skint and adverts are a sure way of making a packet very quickly. George Orwell said that advertising was like the rattling of a stick inside a swill bucket, and I can't help but agree with him. It seems that advertisers will do almost anything to sell their products. If they could get the Queen to do Oxo earwax treatment, or the Pope to do flavoured

condoms, they would.

Fergie is doing an ad for Olympus cameras after their negotiations with Naomi Campbell fell through, doubtless because our Naomi was asking for the GNP of Peru. One wonders whether it was an Olympus that caught Fergie in flagrante, towise, in the first place. Wasn't that when all the trouble started?

At long last, a bit of good news for shortarses, among whose company I number myself. According to some recent research, it seems that we live longer lives in our short little bodies than the lanky ones do. Hopefully, this will make up for years of looking at the back of peoples' heads, looking ridiculous trying to climb over fences, and wearing jeans that have been folded over several times at the bottom, giving short people the appearance of dwarf country and western singers. Small women don't have such a problem as small men, many of whom seem dead unhappy with the fact that they cannot stand

head and shoulders above us women and feel superior by being able to point out features on the horizon out of our sight. Hence the small man's syndrome, resulting in a compensatory blustering drive for some sort of prize. Well, little guys, console yourselves with the thought that a lot of long coffins will be passing you by before you get to kick the bucket.

Do these fashionable social debates that pop up in the press really achieve anything? One week it's stalkers, the next it's badly behaved children. This week, on the heels of Gaezza's appalling behaviour, it's beating your wife. Why do these blokes do it, how often do they do it, how can we stop them, and do the women that put up with it have some fatal incurable emotional flaw? Or is it their fault? Theories abound, all tainted with the political and social stance of the newspaper or magazine in question, from your Sun full-page colour-spectacular wife-beating special to your Times more-serious-but-equally-judgmental approach. Is it just descriptive and page-filling, or prescriptive and genuinely meant? It's just that not much seems to be changing. Everyone panders to their readers' prejudices and then moves on to the next topic of the day.

Perhaps Princess Diana summed it up most eloquently in her *Panorama* interview when she referred to "battered and battered that". As Elvis Costello said, "Yesterday's news is tomorrow's fish and chip paper." Next subject, please.

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What has Bill Clinton got that Tony Blair hasn't? To use the three reasons why women like Bill (as adumbrated in this paper yesterday by my colleague Suzanne Moore): politics, empathy and marriage to a strong woman.

Time surely qualifies on numbers one and three. So it is Bill's empathy that explains his credit in the gender bank.

Chambers' 21st Century Dictionary defines empathy as "the ability to share, understand and feel another person's feelings". And in Bill Clinton's case, the desire to share is almost palpable.

But according to a young woman called Paula Jones, it is not only feelings that the President likes to share. Ms Jones's lawsuit against the President for proactive empathy is likely to be heard in court now that the election is over.

Hers is a strange tale. A receptionist at the Excelsior Hotel in Little Rock, Arkansas, she was called to the then Governor's bedroom by a state trooper. Ms Jones decided that Bill probably wanted to discuss her career (perhaps the telephoneist at the Statehouse had just retired, and Paula was aware of the vacancy), so she climbed, and in she went.

Once inside, she says, Clinton "took my hand. He was loosening his tie. He told me, 'You have nice curves. I love the way your hair goes down your body.'"

Things quickly went from bad to worse. Governor Clinton (whose "face was just red, he'd red") approached the sofa on which she was sitting and "as he sat down, he lowered his trousers and underwear".

This, I would imagine, an undignified and uncomfortable posture in which it must be quite easy to fall over, but which is by no means physically impossible.

But then Ms Jones lands the killer blow, the one that may well stand up in court. "There were," she reveals, "distinguishing characteristics in Clinton's genital area."

Not, of course, that she stopped to look, because—understandably—she jumped up and left the room. And although the White House contests these claims with the utmost vigour, the *Daily Tele-*

graph correspondent Stephen Robinson wrote that "somehow her account rings true, in all its salacious detail".

Well, perhaps. Ms Jones has filed an affidavit in which she has described those "distinguishing characteristics" in Clinton's genital area which she noticed. She is not prepared to reveal what these were until the case comes to court, when the description may help her to get the half a million quid damages she is claiming for the trauma of seeing Bill's willy.

But we can speculate. Now, all of us men hope that we have distinguishing characteristics in our genital areas (in fact, most of us hope that we have the same one). We would not like to think that we are completely indistinguishable genitally from our partners' former boyfriends, brothers and fathers. We would have to admit, however, that most such distinguishing features would not be visible on cursory inspection—that a degree of familiarity would be required.

So what was it that the startled Paula noticed in the nanosecond between the dropped shorts and the flight for the door? What so burned itself into her retina, and impressed itself into her mind? A mole will not do. Could it be immense size? Or minuscule length? An extraordinary bend to the left, or a remarkable bias to the right? Was it a luminous green, with mauve hangings? Or was it—as my friend John speculates—tattooed with the words "it's the economy, stupid"?

Well, pretty soon Paula will tell us. And we can expect calls for transparency and disclosure on the part of the President. A Senate committee may examine Mr Clinton in private and find either for or against him. Hillary will go on a chat-show and quibble with Paula's description. "I'm sorry, but those just aren't the genitals I married, Oprah."

Meanwhile, Mr Stephanopoulos, Clinton's whip election wonk, is expected any day, ready to advise Tony about how to show empathy to women. Show it, Tony, but just make sure it doesn't have any distinguishing features.

Thirty years ago, the TV film *Cathy Come Home* revealed to a shocked nation the extent of Britain's housing crisis. Immediate action was pledged; the charity Shelter was founded.

How much has changed since? The author, who researched and wrote the film, reflects on the continued presence of forced evictions, homelessness and housing famine—what *Cathy* achieved, and what it didn't.

"I feel jubilation," one homeless father cried out to me as he entered the gothic portals of the ancient workhouse to rejoin his family.

One of the most important changes achieved by *Cathy Come Home* was that hundreds of husbands were allowed to join wives and children from whom they had been separated in hostels for the homeless.

This, it can be safely claimed, was a direct result of the film and the campaigning done by myself and Ken Loach, the film's director.

This separation of husbands was an appalling custom which split up families at a traumatic time when they most needed each other's support. In at least one hostel, men had been sent to prison for climbing in to be with their loved ones.

Birmingham allowed hundreds of men to rejoin their families in time for Christmas. Other hostels followed suit, so that throughout Britain, these tragic forced separations were brought to an end.

There were other changes. Many hostels at that time turned mothers and children out into the streets between 2pm and 5pm to "get some fresh air" and "find themselves accommodation", even when it was raining. Many hostels operated a curfew, sometimes as early as 8pm. Mothers who got back late were penalised with the threat of eviction. That cruel rule was also abolished as a result of *Cathy*.

This happened very dramatically in Birmingham, where, half-way through a large public meeting about their plight, all the homeless families got up to leave to be back in their hostels in time for the curfew. The council official responsible got a round of applause when he rescinded the curfew on the spot. Again, other hostels throughout the country followed suit.

Conditions at Newington Lodge in Southwark, which was a sorting place for homeless families in the old LCC area, and the first hostel I visited, were heart-breaking.

It was a vast and austere Victorian workhouse in which up to three or four families were crammed into each room. There was a feeling of utter hopelessness. Feeding was communal and there was endemic dysentery from which children were dying.

Mothers, at their wits' end, kept their children away from the dining room, hoping that this would prevent them catching the disease. But they had to



In a time of great bonanza, a government that can acquiesce in the homelessness of so large a part of its population must be reckoned unfit to govern

pay quite a large rent for being there and couldn't afford to feed their children; in the end, they would have to use the dining room, with sometimes fatal results. Little children were often seen leaving Newington Lodge on their last journey.

Some mothers, as I showed in *Cathy*, did a runner, tried to hide somewhere and fought to keep their children when eviction came. "My children were torn from my arms just like you showed," wrote one mother after seeing the film.

Cathy brought an end to that. A government circular urged local authorities not to separate children from their parents for reasons of homelessness; parents and children must whenever possible be kept together. Within a year or so, the number of children sepa-

rated from their parents in this way dropped from thousands a year to hundreds.

So now for the bad news. When *Cathy* was first shown, there were 12,500 people, including children, in emergency accommodation for the homeless. Thirty years later, in June this year, the equivalent figure was 100,000—a tenfold increase. (Of these, 12,000 people were in bed and breakfast establishments, at a cost of a million pounds a week, or £33 per head per night.)

Immediately after *Cathy*, there was a Labour pledge to see that building would be increased to 500,000 new homes a year. In the following period, 200,000 council homes were built yearly. We did, just once, pass the 500,000 figure.

Then came the great housing

cutback, initiated by Labour and continued by the Tories. Last year, only 812 council dwellings were built; to which should be added 31,000 housing association dwellings.

Last year, there were 50,000 mortgage repossession evictions—1,000 each week, or 20 each working day.

Last year, 125,000 households were officially accepted as homeless by councils in England—part of well over a million households accepted as officially homeless over the last decade.

These figures do not include single homeless people, among them the sort that *Cathy* became when, deprived of husband and children, she was no longer allowed to remain at the hostel for the homeless.

At that time, it was rare to

live. Of an evening, amid a sea of beds and boxes and suitcases containing the families' possessions, Dad may typically be watching the telly. Mum cooking up tea on an illegal electric ring, baby crawling around creating havoc and daughter trying to do her homework.

Oblivious to all this, the Government has come up with a housing act which will weaken even further the duty of local authorities to provide emergency accommodation, or provide permanent homes for homeless people. The act also makes it easier for landlords to evict tenants with rent arrears.

Those who aspire to ideas beyond their status, such as a home where they can live peacefully, are still reminded that they should not be too optimistic or cocky.

Extraordinary though it may seem, the housing famine appears to me to have been artificially created. The thinking might be that people who are homeless or in fear of eviction will be reminded of who is boss and be less likely to take to the streets in protest.

In a time of great bonanza, with the mega-sale of once-for-all assets—oil and nationalised industries—a government that for year after year can acquiesce in the homelessness of so large a proportion of its population must surely be reckoned unfit to govern.

There is, it seems to me, a case to be answered. Could we not return to the idealism of the post-war years (another time of housing famine), when scores of thousands of returning soldiers and their families took the law into their own hands and occupied empty property, especially the camps made redundant by a shrinking army?

There are not far short of a million empty homes, many kept void by army or government departments. Have we as a nation lost all memory of that idealism and ability to do what is right, even if it does mean trampling down bureaucratic complacency, possibly bypassing some of the sinking bogs of red tape? Are the ordinary folk—you and me—too cowed these days to do it? There is far more empty property than there are homeless people. Britain and its resources belong to all of us, not just to police or government.

We have not been overrun by an overweening, imperious, authoritarian, hostile power who have planted themselves in our town halls and seats of government, even if it sometimes feels like it.

Lucre made the spires what they are

Oxford University, traditionally the home of lost causes, seems bent on becoming the home of lost donations.

The don's parliament, Congregation, voted down Wafic Said's princely and historic gift of £20m to build a world-class business school right in the middle of Oxford. The dons that did not turn up to bark will soon have the chance to overturn this daft decision by a postal vote. They should reject the arguments put forward—often in high-minded prose, but too often based on malicious motive—because there are three reasons why the dons' decision is wrong.

First, because of the historic shortsightedness of their view, which is prejudiced against rich-merchant adventurers, and in particular if they are foreign. Oxford would not be like it if it were a buccannering and free-spirited businessmen operating abroad had not prospered, and then decided to put a good slice of their prosperity into the university.

Ponder Cecil Rhodes and all that African money. This treasure-house architecture and powerhouse of scientific and intellectual endeavour simply would not exist if it had not been for the help of people like Mr Said, stretching back through the centuries to the high Middle Ages.

Yet there is among a small but influential minority in the university the perfectly disgusting view that money generously offered is tainted by the



In refusing "tainted money" for a business school, Oxford's dons are ignoring their own long tradition and acting out of malice, argues John Patten

origin of the hand that offers it. Photographs of the scene outside Congregation during the debate were sadly typical of modern Oxford—undergraduates holding banners with such thoughtful messages as "we don't want your bloody money". These student manifestations, and those of some of their donnish elders, would be quaint if they were not so damaging to one of Britain's greatest institutions. The opposition to Mr Said's gift seems largely based on wild accusations of tainted money, for which there is absolutely no foundation, and is linked to the fact that Mr Said is a friend of Lady Thatcher.

I am convinced that much, although not all, of the arguments against this donation emanated from a bunch of intellectual and political pygmies who are afraid to come out for fear of demonstrating that they are deeply prejudiced—just the sort of political incorrectness that they are endlessly trying to root out in other people. This xenophobia among those who prattle on about the importance of a "plural society" is unforgivable.

Just imagine if on this very site Bill Gates of Microsoft had offered £20m to build a business school. The donnish world would have been falling over itself to applaud such a magnificent WASP benefaction.

Second, what about the site? Open green space is important in Oxford, and the river valleys provide vital green lungs right in the heart of the city. This business school would cer-

tainly make central Oxford even more crowded, with buildings of all sorts, shapes, sizes and antiquity hugging each other.

But the university has flourished precisely because of that crowding, with dons in their departments, or in the senior common rooms of their colleges, rubbing intellectual sparks off each other as they meet there or in the streets and lanes of the city centre. Its very crowded nature is part of the dynamic that has driven Oxford on through the centuries.

Third, if Oxford donnery in its postal vote really does reject this benefaction, or if the city council then decides to compound the injury by refusing to give it planning permission, then town and gown together will be making the classic "science park mistake".

What is this? Thirty years ago, Cambridge decided to have one, to the immense benefit of that university and its townfolk, revitalising the real economy of the area just as it stimulated scientific Cambridge. Oxford missed out. What this business school would do is have exactly the same multiplier effect on Oxford, not just on the intellectual life of the university, but by creating the extraordinary range of jobs and activities that will flow from it, preventing the city from sliding more into a theme park with old buildings.

The business of business should not be recharged as vulgar. If we are going to be prosperous in the 21st century,

then we need to build, not reject, a culture of people prepared to participate in vigorous economic endeavours. If this project fails, and the university settles for second best—building a business school years later, out beyond the ring road—then young men and women will daily walk past it, they will see that it is there, and by the virtue of it being there be encouraged to recognise it as part of their culture.

What is an integrated business school? It is so vital and its central location critical. What about those almost incessantly approached by colleges and the university to make donations? It is a myth that it is "vulgar big business" that always give all the donations to a university like Oxford. Great sums of money are raised continually by approaching individuals who give their standing order for so many pounds a month, or an occasional hard-earned gift of £500. How will they feel if the university slaps this gift full in the face? Many will think that if they do not want £20m, they cannot want any £500.

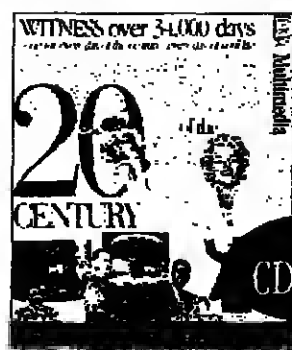
A lot will also conclude that there is something very rotten in the heart of Oxford. And that it was not Mr Said's business school.

John Patten, MP for Oxford West and Abingdon, was once both a Fellow of an Oxford college, and Education Secretary.

ON THIS DAY 1969



Royalty must cut costs, says Philip
9th November 1969



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Roger Bootle: Concerned about the exchange rate

Bootle to replace Minford on 'wise person' panel

Diane Coyle
Economics Editor

The Chancellor of the Exchequer has reshuffled his panel of "wise persons", replacing the most controversial of his six advisers with a prominent City economist.

Professor Patrick Minford, an outspoken Liverpool University professor, will be replaced when his appointment expires at the end of the year by Roger Bootle.

He, chief economist at HSBC Markets and a visiting professor at Manchester Business School.

Professor Minford, a committed Thatcherite, ruffled Treasury feathers earlier this year by accusing the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, of failing to understand the economy and of jeopardising the Conservatives' re-election chances. He has recommended big cuts in interest rates and taxes,

putting him in a minority on the Treasury's Panel.

He said: "Being on the panel has been frustrating, but I put my views across and I enjoyed it." He welcomed the choice of Mr Bootle, who said yesterday that he was most concerned at this juncture about the strength of the exchange rate.

"There is a serious danger of a repetition of the traditional British policy error, which would be catastrophic for in-

dustrial," Mr Bootle said. The Treasury likes to have a wide range of views represented by the six wise persons - cynics suggest it can help to justify any policy. Mr Bootle agreed that although he and Professor Minford used very different intellectual frameworks, they had many views in common.

Both believe that interest rates can fall without the risk of higher inflation because labour market deregulation means un-

employment has not reached the level where wages start to rise. The title of Mr Bootle's recently published book, *The Death of Inflation*, gives the flavour of his views very clearly. Both men are also Eurosceptics.

However, Mr Bootle disagrees with Professor Minford's call for a giveaway Budget. "I would argue for tax rises or big spending cuts," he said. That means all six of the Chancellor's advisers are recommending a

tough Budget. Two other panel members, Professor Tim Congdon of Lombard Street Research and Gavin Davies of Goldman Sachs, had their appointments renewed for another year.

The remaining three - Kate Barker of the CBI, Bridget Rosewell of Business Strategies and Martin Weale of the National Institute of Economic and Social Research - have another two years to serve.



Patrick Minford: Ruffled Treasury feathers this year

Electricity companies attract third US predator

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

Fresh turmoil gripped regional electricity companies yesterday as the third US predator to stalk the sector in the space of a fortnight was believed to be evaluating mounting a possible takeover bid.

The potential US power bidder was thought to be CMS Energy, which supplies electricity and gas to 1.5 million customers in Michigan. It had sales last year of \$3.9bn (£2.4bn) and made profits of \$603m (£365m). CMS Energy has been increasingly active in power projects outside the US and makes 20 per cent of its revenues abroad.

Kelly Farr, a CMS spokesman, declined to comment. "It is company policy not to comment on rumours about our business activities," he said.

One suggestion was that CMS could pounce on Yorkshire Electricity, though the company is not believed to have had approaches from any potential suitors for five or six months.

The possibility was also raised that a rival bidder could be in the wings for East Midlands, which is facing a possible bid from Dominion Resources, a Virginia utility company.

Dominion has said that it would not be prepared to pay much more than 60p a share for East Midlands, valuing the Nottingham-based group at £1.2bn, though analysts have suggested a successful bidder would have to pay around 67p. Shares in the company edged up to 59.5p.

The outcome of the Dominion board meeting is not expected to be known until the stock market reopens on Monday.

However fund managers doubted whether the UK Gov-

ernment would allow a £766m takeover bid for Northern Electric from US-owned CE Electric and any bid for East Midlands to proceed.

The uncertainty took its toll on Northern Electric's share price yesterday. Northern shares slumped 18p to 605.5p, which is 24.5p below CE Electric's 630p offer price.

It enabled CE Electric to buy a further 2.7 million shares in the company and takes CE Electric's stake to 29.45 per cent, just short of the maximum stake of almost 30 per cent permitted at this stage in the bidding process under takeover rules.

Big sellers of Northern shares over the past two days included Mercury Asset Management, which sold 1.19 million shares, representing almost its entire stake in the group, and Hill Samuel, which sold 564,000 shares.

David Sokol, the chairman of CE Electric's main shareholder, power generator CalEnergy of Nebraska, called on Northern's management to recommend the offer to shareholders. "To prolong this takeover can only be damaging to shareholders' interests. Our intent towards Northern Electric has always been friendly and I hope that the Northern Electric board will recognise these market realities and discuss with us the recommendation of our offer," he said.

Mr Sokol's comments were dismissed by Northern's advisers, who insisted the battle was far from over.

A disappointed David Morris, the Northern chairman, said he still believed the 630p-a-share bid was too low and blamed the share price fall on the belief that the bid would be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

Market report, page 24



Crazy about classics: John Goldsmith is restoring a written-off Aston Martin DB6 for the race

Photograph: Christopher Jones

80 rally to the call of a classic car race

John Willcock

A glittering array of more than 80 businessmen, lawyers, accountants, aristocrats and the odd prince is preparing for the 16,000-kilometre Peking to Paris classic car rally next year.

The epic will mark the 90th anniversary of the first such rally, which was won by Prince Borghese of Italy.

This time around drivers include Christopher Dunkley from Lloyd's of London driving a 1935 Bentley 3.5 Tourer, and John Stutter, chairman of Coopers & Lybrand in China, in a 1934 Rolls-Royce.

Aristocratic polish is added by Lord Montagu, who is driving the oldest car in the rally, a 1914 Prince Henry Vauxhall. The royal contingent is led by Prince Idris Shah of Malaysia in a 1954 Studebaker Coupe.

The adventure has been organised by Phillip Young, who has helped put on previous Monte Carlo rallies, and his colleague, Peter Browning. Mr

Young has negotiated rights of way across 22 countries, including China, Nepal, Pakistan, Iran and Turkey.

The rally starts in September next year and lasts 45 days. Drivers pay a £25,000 entry fee and must carry all their own spares. No back-up vehicles are allowed, and as John Goldsmith,

one of the drivers says, "If you break down in the middle of nowhere 'you're on your own mate'." But the organisers will use one sweeper car at the back to make sure any broken down cars can be helped to the next checkpoint on the journey.

Mr Goldsmith's firm, Goldsmith and Young, restores Aston Martins at its workshops in Wiltshire, and Mr Goldsmith himself is restoring a written-off Aston Martin DB6 "in order to win the race".

The steep entry fee has caused some problems. Sir

David Steel, the former Liberal leader, is looking for sponsorship. The classic car rallying fanatic was originally going to China in his 1965 Rover, but he sold it, and will now probably go in his 1962 Riley.

Geny Acher, head of audit at KPMG, is looking forward to the rally with a mixture of excitement and trepidation. He's driving his own 1932 Aston Martin International, and with an engine capacity of just 1.5 litres, one of the smallest cars in the rally.

"This little car has got to get us up to 17,000 feet [in Nepal], along with all our spares and camping equipment. The variations in conditions are going to be terrific."

Mr Acher's only previous experience of this type of thing was a four-day Euro Classic Car Rally, when his wife navigated. "She's very good at it. Both me and my co-driver, who's an expert mechanic, are useless at navigating, so it should be interesting."



Local colour: A contestant in the 1907 car rally, won by Prince Borghese of Italy

A&L rebel customers fight flat-rate payout

John Willcock

Alliance & Leicester Building Society is facing a mounting campaign by rebel customers who object to the flat-rate payout it has proposed for its flotation next year.

Put Mountain, 63, is a retired businessman who has been with A&L for 30 years, and he has set up an "Action Group" to win better compensation for "loyal long-term investors".

The society caused a stir when it announced 10 days ago that it intends to give a flat-rate 250 shares (worth an estimated £1,000) to all members who had a minimum balance

of £100 at 31 December 1995. This is in contrast to other societies which are converting to plc status, such as the Halifax, which has a sliding scale rewarding higher and more long-term investors.

Mr Mountain has written to Peter White, chief executive of A&L, requesting a face-to-face meeting to put his claims for better treatment. Mr Mountain said: "The Alliance & Leicester will have had a shock over the last few days about the extent of the deep anger which their move has provoked. They should take note of that protest which is clearly being felt by many thousands of investors."

The action group claims it has been inundated with calls. "But with 2.4 million investors we know we are only seeing the barest tip of the iceberg. Even so it is clear to us that an overwhelming majority of those investors intend shutting down their accounts with A&L."

Mr Mountain said in one hour alone he took calls from people whose collective investment in the society was nearly £2m. "This must surely be deeply worrying for A&L - and possibly even more so for the stock market authorities, who surely can't relish the appalling odour surrounding a company shortly to be floated on the Exchange."

Man Utd boss nets 39% pay rise

Patrick Toohar

The basic pay of Martin Edwards, Manchester United's chief executive, soared by 39 per cent last year, despite the football club reporting a sharp drop in profits.

The company's latest report and accounts, just posted to shareholders, shows Mr Edwards received a base salary of £212,000 for the 12 months to July 1996, compared with £153,000 the previous year.

It also revealed that Mr Edwards earned a £67,000 performance-related bonus, even though United's operating income actually fell to £14.2m from £15.6m due to lower gate receipts and weaker merchandising sales caused by redevelopment of the club's North

Stand, which temporarily cut capacity at its Old Trafford stadium.

All told, Mr Edwards' total



Martin Edwards: Scored a pay rise despite profits drop

pay, including benefits and pensions contributions, rose to £321,000 from £230,000, an increase of 11 per cent.

Mr Edwards is United's largest shareholder with a 17.2 per cent stake, entitling him to an annual dividend income of more than £50,000. He has also been the single biggest beneficiary of United's soaring share price. At last night's close his stake was worth almost £18m with the shares closing down 8.5p at 496.5p.

A company spokesman said Mr Edwards' bonus had nothing to do with Manchester United winning the League and FA Cup double last season. Instead, the issue was decided by the club's remuneration committee, headed by United chair-

man Professor Sir Roland Smith, and based on hitting an internal target for profits before transfer fees.

This figure rose slightly last year to £16.7m, but was only struck after a one-off gain of £2.2m arising from a 10-year publishing deal with VCI, the video group that earlier this year tried to buy Manchester United for about £300m. The spokesman said that United's results came in above analysts' expectations.

Mr Edwards was criticised last month after reportedly saying he would only entertain bids for the club above £400m. That led to heavy buying of United's shares, forcing the club to issue a statement saying no approaches had been received.

A spokesman for the Frankfurt prosecutors office, which is handling public statements concerning the case, refused to comment on the statement from Mr Lopez's lawyer.

"We are not commenting on whether a decision has already been taken to bring charges or to terminate proceedings," Hildegard Becker-Toussaint, the office's spokeswoman, said.

She said a decision would be made by the end of the year on whether criminal charges were to be brought against Mr Lopez and the three other executives. German newspaper reports had earlier quoted Mr Lopez's lawyer as saying he expected the four would be charged with misappropriation and unfair competition.

If found guilty, Mr Lopez could face a maximum prison sentence of five years.

STOCK MARKETS

FTSE 100

Dow Jones*

Nikkei

*New Average as of 1996 Year

FTSE 100: 1996 Year

Index	Close	Day's change	Change(%)	1996 High	1996 Low	YTD(%)
FTSE 100	3910.80	+10.40	+0.3	4073.10	3632.30	4.03
FTSE 250	1953.60	+1.30	+0.0	2022.10	1816.60	3.55
FTSE 350	1953.40	+1.30	+0.2	2022.10	1816.60	3.93
FTSE SmallCap	2158.04	+1.07	+0.0	2244.36	1954.06	3.15
FTSE All-Share	1929.51	+3.72	+0.2	1994.54	1791.95	3.87
New York	8219.83	+13.78	+0.2	8208.04	5032.94	2.15
Tokyo	21201.04	+429.93	+2.1	22666.80	19734.70	0.77
Hong Kong	12781.16	+15.90	+0.1	12775.47	10204.87	3.28
Frankfurt	2709.93	+26.81	+1.0	2739.83	2253.36	1.72

Source: FT Information

Source: FT Information

INTEREST RATES									
Short sterling		UK medium gilt		US long bond		Money Market Rates		Bond Yields	
Index	1 Month	1 Year	Medium Term (%)	Year Ago	Long Term (%)	Year Ago	Index	1 Month	1 Year
UK	6.06	6.81	7.67	7.86	7.73	7.92	UK	6.06	6.81
US	5.29	5.56	3.27	5.99	6.58	6.33	US	5.29	5.56
Japan	0.44	0.59	2.71	2.58	-	-	Japan	0.44	0.59
Germany	3.06	3.25	5.92	6.36	6.73	-	Germany	3.06	3.25

CURRENCIES									
Pound		Euro		Dollar		Other Indicators		Base Rates	
Index	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago	Index	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago	Index	Yesterday
\$ (London)	1.6447	-0.20c	1.5789	£ (London)	0.8080	+0.07	0.8343	¥ (London)	153.8+2.12c
\$ (NY)	1.6483	+0.02c	1.5789	£ (NY)	0.8066	-0.01	0.8349	¥ (NY)	153.8+2.12c
DM (London)	2.4736	-0.01c	2.2248	DM (London)	1.5058	-0.19c	1.4123	¥ (London)	111.550
¥ (London)	183.459	-10.872	159.633	¥ (London)	111.550	-10.215	100.700	Base Rates	-
£ Index	90.8	-0.1	83.8	£ Index	90.2	unch	83.8		

Dresdner unveils plan for \$50bn asset group

Dresdner Bank has announced ambitious plans to create a \$50bn global asset management group for all its institutional funds outside Germany, writes John Willcock.

The group will unite the institutional side of Kleinwort Benson Investment Management in London, Thornton Group in London and Hong Kong, and RCM in San Francisco. It will employ 900 people world-wide.

Dresdner, Germany's second-largest bank, bought Kleinwort for £1bn last year and has already concentrated its cor-

porate finance and investment banking activities in London.

The new group will be headed up by RCM of San Francisco, an institutional fund manager which Dresdner bought last year.

Simon Robertson, Kleinwort's chief executive, stressed that London would not be weakened by this move.

"This is a big move for us. It will create a truly global asset management business. We hope it will give KBIM, which has not enjoyed as much success as we would have liked in the past, a fillip."



AT&T to sta

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JEREMY WARNER

'If policy is now to be defined on the basis of those "able to afford it", I can think of a whole host of others just as deserving of a windfall tax. Let's begin with all those fat cats in the City, which we all know to be essentially a monopoly'

Labour gets itself in a pickle over utilities tax

There's no such thing as a popular tax, even when it happens to be one directed at the hated privatised utilities. Labour would do well to heed this ancient truism as it digs itself ever deeper into the mire over its windfall profits tax proposal. It could all end up backfiring.

But then we mustn't call it a tax, must we? What is proposed, as Gordon Brown, the shadow Chancellor, constantly insists, is a "levy". We've had this shilly-shallying with the semantics of taxation once before: on that occasion it was Mrs Thatcher and her ministers who ridiculously continued to refer to something they called the community "charge" even as the *hai polloi* were rioting on the streets over what everybody else termed the poll tax.

In this case there is rather more justification for labelling it a levy, for unless Labour changes its mind again – and it has pivoted on this so many times that there is no reason to believe it won't – this will be a one-off charge levied on a specific type of company, those that happen once to have been owned by the state.

It is perhaps the case that the discriminatory, arbitrary and essentially random nature of this tax justifies the term levy. All the same, most of us will continue to think of it as a tax and for that reason the Conservative Party is probably on to a winner in identifying it as a campaigning issue. Fur-

thermore, if ministers can undermine the credibility of the idea sufficiently as to make it seem unworkable, then Labour is in difficulty as the election approaches, for this is the only revenue-raising proposal it has yet come up with. It will, as a consequence, form a cornerstone of Labour's first tax and spending Budget. Strip out the windfall profit tax and Labour will be hard-pressed to deliver on promised spending.

On this front, too, Kenneth Clarke may be on to a winner. On virtually every level you care to take, this is a tax hard to justify and hard to implement. The first rule of taxation is that it should be consistently applied in a non-discriminatory way. On this test, the proposal fails on every score, so much so that Labour's tax lawyers and financial advisers are still years after the proposal was mooted, wrestling with the legal difficulties of defining those the party wants to penalise.

This week we have been treated to a fully blown and increasingly hysterical demonstration of disarray over the issue. It kicked off with a stropful letter to the *Independent* from Tony Blair's head of press, Alastair Campbell, in which he complained bitterly about something written by our good selves on the subject. In the process, he referred to a tax levied on "privatised monopoly utilities".

Given the sensitivity of the issue, you might have thought Mr Campbell would

have taken care to get his definitions right. Certainly PowerGen and National Power took it seriously enough to declare "party time", for whatever else they are, they are not monopolies. Unfortunately for them, Mr Campbell seems to have been a touch sloppy in his drafting.

According to Her Majesty's *Daily Telegraph*, an odd place for Mr Campbell to spin his view of the world, the tax will actually apply to 30 privatised companies. The only pure privatised monopolies are the water and electricity distribution companies and they number 25. So there are five non-monopoly "mystery" companies that will be hit, too. Which are they? Not saying. Labour retorts, which is hardly surprising since it appears not yet to know.

So much for the problems of definition. Then comes the even thornier question of how to levy the tax. For this I have turned to the famous "leaked" City report from which Labour seems to have garnered its list of 30 "comfortably" able to afford the £5bn-£10bn Labour wants for its training proposals.

Funally enough it didn't take long to unearth this document since it turned out to be nothing more remarkable than a four-page circular to clients from SBC Warburg, which has been hanging around on my desk for the past week. As it happens I have been "leaked" another two quite similar reports

over the past month which I would be happy to forward to the Labour Party should they wish to give me a bell. No doubt it is quite a compliment to SBC Warburg to be used as the basis for Labour's latest musings on the subject, though its clients among the utilities might think otherwise, but really.

If policy is now to be defined on the basis of those "able to afford it", I can think of a whole host of others just as deserving of a windfall tax. Let's begin with all those fat cats in the City, which we all know to be essentially a monopoly. A retrospective tax on City bonuses will do for starters. Now, let's see. Who's got a bit of money to spare? I know. How about Glaxo Wellcome? Sting Sir Richard Sykes for 500 mil and he'd barely notice the difference. Then what about old Wafic Said? Oxford dons have just turned down his offer of £20m towards a business school, so thanks very much, we'll have it instead.

I exaggerate, of course, but to be honest, not very much. You might as well target any company or individual who has enjoyed "above average returns" for all the difference it would make. If there is an intellectual justification for it as far as the privatised utilities are concerned, it is to do with the contention that these companies were hopelessly undersold at the time of privatisation and that the taxpayer has been short-changed as a consequence. Well, perhaps,

but it is also the case that they were sold for the best that could be achieved at the time commensurate with the Government's other aim of wider share ownership. That they were not sold for more is in part down to the Labour Party, which did its utmost to undermine each successive privatisation.

To turn round now and say let's have a bit more money is like the man who sells his house for too little and then later tries to reclaim the difference; it is not the way of the world. Furthermore, in a great number of cases, the present generation of shareholders are not the ones that have enjoyed the windfall gains. US companies buying into our regional electricity industry have done so at the top of the market. If Labour attacks them, retaliatory action will be taken by the Clinton administration against British interests in the US.

Not that there is any chance of Labour backing off here. Labour leaders may be divided on the detail of this new tax but they are united in believing it a reasonable way to raise money. All the same, the president is an awful one, which one way or another, utility customers will end up paying for. Strangely, the easiest and fairest way to raise money for spending, increasing corporation tax across the board, seems to have been missed by the Labour Party. But then that's one Labour would be well advised not to trumpet from the rooftops.

AT&T rolls out big guns to stall BT wedding plan

America's biggest telephone group is gearing up its lobbying machine, writes David Usborne in New York

AT&T, America's biggest phone company, is gearing up its awesome lobbying machine to stall British Telecom's proposed £13bn merger with MCI, the second-largest long-distance carrier in the US. The deal, the largest to involve a British company, threatens AT&T's number one spot in the US telecommunications business.

That AT&T would not sit back and watch the BT-MCI marriage sail through was obvious from the first words uttered on the affair by the chief executive, Robert Allen. Pardon me, he said, but had not the US government better first establish that the British market is open before giving BT its MCI plum?

The translation is clear: AT&T will be doing all it can to persuade US regulators, starting with the Federal Com-

munications Commission (FCC), to subject the agreement to the most rigorous of scrutiny. It would like best of all to have it knocked down dead. That is over-ambitious. But AT&T can hope to use the proposed merger to gain improved market leverage in Britain.

"AT&T is going to be pulling out all the stops and doing everything it can to at least slow the imminent merger and to help clear the hurdles that remain for them in the United Kingdom," Jeffrey Kagan, of Kagan Telecom Associates, said yesterday. And AT&T is no lobbying amateur. "They are used to getting what they want – their

stalling ability is legendary," AT&T is diligent in currying favour with Washington's powerful. During the Chicago Democratic Convention in August, for instance, the company invited delegates to a "Party of Champions" in the restaurant owned by basketball legend Michael Jordan. The chairman of the Democratic National Committee, Donald Fowler, was treated to a breakfast cruise on the lake. A similar cruise was offered to Republican leaders at their San Diego convention.

Less conspicuous, but much more potent, is the network of lobbyists that AT&T has working for it in Washington. It is a roster made up largely of former members of Congress that was deployed most recently ahead of the passage last February of the Telecommunications Deregulation Bill, which tore down competitive barriers between long-distance and local carriers in the US.

Those in AT&T's pay include such figures as Robert Strauss, a former Democrat cabinet appointee and George Bush's ambassador in Washington, and Vin Weber, who represented his Minnesota district in the House of Representatives for 12 years before setting up as a consultant in 1995.

Mr Weber was a co-chair of Bob Dole's doomed presi-

dential campaign and is perhaps the oldest political friend of Newt Gingrich. When the telecoms reform debate was at its peak, Mr Weber was able one day to walk Mr Allen into the Speaker's office.

In his statement, Mr Allen insisted that Washington should "condition any approval of the merger on the complete and unqualified opening of the telecom market in the United Kingdom".

He went on: "BT still controls more than 90 per cent of all local telephone connections [in Britain] and equal access to customers and telephone providers simply does not exist."

AT&T is likely to have a sympathetic ear, meanwhile, in Reed Hundt, chairman of the FCC. In a visit to London only in September, Mr Hundt criticised European countries for

moving too slowly to dilute the grip of monopoly carriers, including BT.

"In the US we were very lucky that AT&T was broken up. Yet nowhere else... do we see a repetition of our clearly successful experiment with demopolisation." Fancy a cruise, Mr Hundt?



Currying favour: Robert Allen, chief executive of AT&T, is asking the US government to establish that the British market is open before approving the BT deal

moving too slowly to dilute the grip of monopoly carriers, including BT.

"In the US we were very lucky that AT&T was broken up. Yet nowhere else... do we see a repetition of our clearly successful experiment with demopolisation." Fancy a cruise, Mr Hundt?

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Prison building boosts PFI

Michael Harrison

The Government's Private Finance Initiative received a double boost yesterday as two new prison and rail schemes were given the go-ahead.

Transport executives in Manchester announced that Altram, a consortium including the construction group John Laing, has been selected as the preferred bidder for a £100m Metrolink extension.

Kvaerner, the Norwegian shipping and engineering group which took over Trafalgar House earlier this year, meanwhile announced that it is to build a £30m PFI prison in Nottinghamshire. The Manchester Metrolink extension to Salford Quays and Eccles is expected to be operational by 1999 and will carry 6 million passengers a year. The consortium, which also includes Ansaldo Transport and Sercio Group, will also take over operation of the existing Metrolink system from Bury to Altrincham and through to Manchester city centre.

Roger Hall, a director of projects for Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive, said it now needed government approval for a grant funding package to allow formal contracts to be signed.

The Metrolink system involves trams running on old rail track. The extension is expected to bring £60m of benefits to the local area and reduce car journeys by around one million a year.

The prison project at Lowdham Grange, eight miles east of Nottingham, is the third to be built and run under the PFI and will house 500 category B inmates. The consortium that will operate the new jail, Premier Prison Services, is made up of Sercio and Wachenhut Corrections (UK). It has been awarded a 25-year contract.

The campus-style prison, due to open in 1998, will also feature a workshop complex, two housing blocks and a sports and educational complex.

IN BRIEF

• **Regalian**, the property group, said it planned to tap shareholders for £16.5m to finance residential projects in central London. The one-for-two rights issue at 30p, which is being underwritten by BZW, will be used to cash in on the rise in residential prices in London, which Regalian believes are set to continue for several years. The group announced pre-tax profits raised from £400,000 to £1.6m and said it would pay an interim dividend of 0.4p.

• **Yorkshire-Tyne Tees**, the ITV franchise holder, yesterday issued a writ against CIA, the media buyers, following an escalating dispute over the sale of air time in several ITV regions. YTT is claiming £785,000, in settlement of the disagreement over discounts offered to CIA for the sale of air time which was not subsequently taken up. The dispute had thrown into further question the complicated arrangements used to sell ad time on ITV, industry leaders said last night. Other ITV companies at the centre of the wrangle are Granada, LWT and Border Television, all members of the Granada-controlled Laser sales house.

• **The John Lewis Partnership** said its department store sales rose 11.1 per cent in the week to 2 November from a year earlier. For the 14 weeks to 2 November, turnover grew 15.6 per cent year-on-year. Total sales, including those from the Waitrose supermarket chain, rose 12.4 per cent in the 14-week period.

• **Porsche**, the German sports car maker, is set to resume dividend payments after reporting net profits rose to DM48.1m (£19.3m) in the year to July from DM2.1m a year earlier. A preference share dividend of DM2.50 and DM1.50 dividend per common share, equivalent to a total payout of DM3.5m, will be put to shareholders in January. In addition, preference shareholders will receive back-payments for the years they did not receive a dividend. Porsche last paid a dividend on its preference shares in 1992 and has not paid out on its ordinary shares since 1993.

• **Reliance Security** said trading profits for the six months to 1 November would be substantially below market expectations and last year's figure. It said the market for contract security management and manpower services was experiencing continuing competitive pressures, resulting in a slowdown in growth levels experienced in previous years and margin decline.

• **Community Hospitals Group** said Sir Peter Thompson had retired as chairman and resigned from the board.

• **Sema** has been given a contract by Malaysia to develop computer software for the organisers of the 1998 Kuala Lumpur Commonwealth Games. Under the deal, valued at £2.17m by industry sources, the group will supply and integrate all systems, ranging from accreditation, ticketing and transport to providing results. It will also develop an information system to be integrated with the Internet for world-wide distribution of real-time results and medal standings.

• **Hanson** is raising £1.58m in a placing and open offer. The group said that following the fund-raising, it would be able to look to the future "with confidence". First-half losses were cut from £390,000 to £222,000, but no interim dividend is being paid.

• **Dalgety** warned shareholders that the continuing fall-out from the BSE scare meant first-half profits were unlikely to show any improvement. Yesterday's annual meeting was told that last year's "mad cow" problems were largely over, but that "inevitably the first half of our current year will be affected, and profits are unlikely to show improvement at the interim stage".

• **Roxboro Group** yesterday issued its second profits warning in less than two months. The electronic components group saw its shares dive from 202.5p to 123p after announcing that there was no immediate prospect of any meaningful recovery in demand levels for its DigiLight Electronics Product business. As a result, profits would be below current market expectations, the company said.

• **Unit trusts** appear in The Long Weekend.

Inflation fears turn investors towards Italy

Diane Coyle
Economics Editor

International investors have given an unprecedented thumbs-down to Britain's economic policy.

Following the Bank of England's warning this week that base rates would have to rise, the gap between the interest rate the British government has to pay on its debt and the German government's borrowing costs widened yesterday to nearly two full percentage points.

In addition, the yield on long-term Italian government bonds fell below the yield on benchmark 10-year gilts for the first time. In recent weeks both Spanish and Swedish govern-

ment bonds have seen their yields dip below those on gilts.

"It's a good thing the Greeks do not issue these bonds or there would be one last milestone," said Stephen Lewis, chief economist at London Bond Broking. "The Bank of England is being vindicated."

Kevin Adams, gilts analyst at BZW, said gilts were very good value, yielding a third more than German bunds. "But international investors just won't hold gilts at the moment," he said.

The negative sentiment in the financial markets reflects the prospect that UK inflation will pick up as the economy moves into top gear. The buoyant retail survey reported by the Confederation of British Industry on Thursday reinforced this concern.

The fact that investors now find Italian government bonds more attractive represents a remarkable turnaround. Italy has almost always had higher inflation and weaker government finances than the UK.

Mr Lewis said that Italy's inflation could be lower than the UK's during the next few months, which would make the UK inflation rate the highest among the G7 industrial countries. He said Italy was planning to halve its budget deficit to the equivalent of 3.3 per cent of GDP in 1997, while the UK borrowing requirement was likely to be 3.5 per cent of GDP.

The financial markets have also taken into account Italy's enthusiasm for the single European currency.

Wall St heading for a crash, says Kleinwort

Yesterdays brought a fresh warning that the US stock market is heading for a crash, with investment bank Kleinwort Benson sending a warning to clients to take "extreme care" with regard to share prices around the world during the next few months, writes Diane Coyle.

Equity strategist Albert Edwards advises, in the latest circular: "We are maximum bearish." Kleinwort has raised its holdings of cash to the maximum permissible level of 15 per cent of the total portfolio.

Kleinwort is the latest to join the growing list of financial institutions in its caution about Wall Street – Phillips & Drew Fund Management is the most prominent amongst them because of the scale of its bet against the US market.

Although worried about slow growth in Germany and Japan, it is the US that gives Kleinwort most cause for concern. Mr Edwards writes that US share prices incorporate extremely buoyant expectations of company profits. With the market priced at 16 times prospective corporate earnings in the next year, it is very vulnerable to a fall in the US bond market, he argues.

A reversal of the US bond rally could be triggered by Japanese investors pulling out due to fears that the dollar's period of strength against the yen has come to an end. Etsuko Sakakibara, director general of the Ministry of Finance, said this week financial markets had underestimated the strength of the Japanese economy.

Unilever set to clean up in developing markets

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY MAGNUS GRIMOND

ures, but after disappointing the market all this year, the underlying trends in the core businesses at last look positive. Longer term, there is still plenty to go for at Unilever. Developing markets continue to storm ahead as the burgeoning middle classes demand Western consumer products. Thus sales growth put at 15 per cent in Brazil was fuelled by personal care and detergents, while India, China, Indonesia and the Philippines continue to be star performers.

The key to unlocking this value will depend on the management shake-up being instituted by Niall Fitzgerald, the new chairman of the British end of Unilever. If that results in a more performance-oriented culture at the group, the shares should start to reverse their underperfor-

Unilever: AT A GLANCE
Market value: £11bn, share price £13.455

Trading record	1994	1995	1996	Share price
January 1996	10.5	11.5	12.5	1400
February 1996	11.5	12.5	13.5	1300
March 1996	12.5	13.5	14.5	1200
April 1996	13.5	14.5	15.5	1100
May 1996	14.5	15.5	16.5	1000
June 1996	15.5	16.5	17.5	900
July 1996	16.5	17.5	18.5	800
August 1996	17.5	18.5	19.5	700
September 1996	18.5	19.5	20.5	600
October 1996	19.5	20.5	21.5	500
November 1996	20.5	21.5	22.5	400
December 1996	21.5	22.5	23.5	300
January 1997	22.5	23.5	24.5	200
February 1997	23.5	24.5	25.5	100
March 1997	24.5	25.5	26.5	0

mance. In the meantime, profits of £2.55bn this year, rising to £2.75bn next year, would put the shares on a forward multiple of 15. This is one to lock away.

New doubts over Senior

Senior Engineering is another company which has in the past failed to live up to expectations. Its reputation for taking two steps forward and one step back will be reinforced by yesterday's news that the £28.3m sale of the struggling Thermal Engineering business has been delayed.

The announcement of the disposal in October, quickly followed up by news that Andrew Parrish, a director of Williams Holdings, was filling the chief executive's post after an eight-month vacancy, was seen as marking a revival in the group's fortunes. But at the very least, this new delay puts a question mark over that. Senior is selling Thermal Engineering to Thermal Engineering Corporation, a highly geared management buyout vehicle. The group blames higher costs in the UK industrial boiler business

and the failure to win the expected level of repair work in the US for its inability to complete the deal by the end of October. The intention now is for the sale to go through by 20 December.

Terry Garthwaite, Senior's finance director, says the buyers remain committed to Thermal Engineering, pointing out that the large debts being taken on in the MBO make its finances particularly sensitive to changes in the performance of the business. He insists that there is no sense of them trying to reduce the price.

His confidence is not shared by the stock market, which marked Senior's shares down 7p to 114.5p yesterday. Thermal Engineering lost £237,000 in the first half and the latest problems have caused Senior to warn that the forecast profit from the business has been cut by £1m. It remains to be seen whether the important pre-Christmas repair contracts from US utilities have been deferred, or cancelled completely.

Assuming flat profits of £22m this year from Senior, the share price, standing on 22 times forward earnings, leaves little room for disappointment. Despite suggestions of a bid from TI, the shares look unattractive.

sport

Dangerous game for Holyfield

Tonight's world heavyweight title fight should end quickly, writes Ken Jones in Las Vegas

A big difference between the four contests Mike Tyson has undertaken since being released from prison last year and tonight's defence of the World Boxing Association heavyweight championship against Evander Holyfield at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas is that his opponent has been receiving equal, if somewhat morbid, attention.

This is partly because of the edge Holyfield held in the betting five years ago when Tyson was due to challenge him for the undisputed title. A rib injury caused Tyson to withdraw, but before the contest could be rearranged, he was indicted on a rape charge. They could have fought before Tyson went for trial, but Holyfield, a God-fearing man, refused to entertain him.

Time changes most things and now Holyfield, at 34 a long-odds outsider, is thought to be taking a terrible chance with his future well-being. Required tests at the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota proved Holyfield to be physically sound, but going in with the one of the most devastating punches in heavyweight history causes people to doubt his sanity.

Although boxing has frequently defeated the process of logic, a widespread point of view, and one I share, is that the challenger will last only as long as takes Tyson to draw a bead on him. Three rounds maximum, probably sooner.

Where it would have been difficult to arrive at a conclusion

in 1991, the bout now looks so one-sided, so fraught with peril for Holyfield, that one member of the Nevada State Athletic Commission's medical panel is said to have dissociated himself from sanctioning it.

Bearing this in mind, it may be significant that the choice of referee has fallen not on one of Nevada's two leading officials, Richard Steele and Mills Lane, but Mitch Halpern, a 29-year-old who comes fresh to a world championship in the heavy-weight division.

It is considered important that Halpern took charge of a contest for the World Boxing Council junior-lightweight championship in May last year, when Jimmy Garcia slipped into a coma after an eighth-round stoppage by Gabriel Ruelas, and later died. Since Halpern admits to being still traumatised by the experience, and contests under WBA rules are automatically terminated if a fighter goes down three times in one round, Holyfield appears safe from the extent of his spirit.

Not though from the predictable immediacy of Tyson's violent attacking. Emanuel Steward, who worked with Holyfield and now trains Lennox Lewis, said: "It's impossible to make out a case for Evander, but if he can stand up to Tyson's punches and get in a few of his own it could be interesting."

"The four guys Tyson has fought since coming back haven't been able to lay a glove on him. Peter McNeeley

shouldn't have been in there. Buster Mathis simply covered up. Frank Bruno was petrified. Bruce Seldon brought nothing. Evander will bring all the guts in the world and he's still capable of hurting Tyson. Anything can happen when heavyweights are in the ring, so you can't write him off completely."

One way of beating Tyson involves a column of motorised infantry. James "Buster" Douglas found another when inflicting the only bludgeon on Tyson's professional record. Taking advantage of Tyson's ravaged condition, Douglas got his punches

off first, made good use of a stiff jab, moved just enough, then got in solid rights to the head. Douglas (inactive since slowly preparation cost him the undisputed title in a first defence against Holyfield, who is being brought back by the Las Vegas promoter Bob Arum, said: "I was firing hard against Tyson. My mother had just died and I said: 'Screw it. You can't get caught up in all that Tyson hype.'"

"He's a normal man. He's just built up to be supernatural. That's where most of his opponents have made a big mistake. Instead of trying to

duplicate Buster Douglas, they should enhance their own style. Don't get out of your own element if you see someone throw a punch in a different way. When I went in against Tyson, I worked on what I did best."

The best advice Douglas thinks he can offer Holyfield is to work off his jab. "Tyson has shown that he can take a good shot so one punch won't do it. You have to sustain the effort, wait for the storm to blow itself out. This fight interests me because there are a lot of questions to be answered. Tyson really hasn't been tested. He hasn't lost

his hand speed. Evander can box, but he's got a short fuse. He wants to rumble. I think we're going to see a fight."

From the days of boxing trainers, the 35-year-old Eddie Futch, who prepared Riddick Bowe for three contests against Holyfield, you get a more detailed analysis. "To get through the early rounds, Evander has to do what works best for him and that's punch from the centre of the ring. I've noticed that after five or six rounds, Tyson brings his hands down to the lower part of his jaw and feints with his head advancing to the

target. He tries to get you on the ropes without exposing himself too much. Mathis made him miss wildly, but so far there hasn't been anybody to give Tyson an argument about his reflexes, so I'm curious to know how he would handle the situation if Holyfield can take him to the later rounds."

"But I'm afraid Evander isn't the same fighter. He looked bad in his last contest against Bobby Czyz and you have to think that Tyson's reflexes are still good enough to catch him with a knock-out punch. What concerns me is that if Holyfield goes

out there in kamikaze fashion, he's going to be dealing with the quickest heavyweight around to day and he will be right where Tyson can find him."

Tyson was so relaxed at a press conference on Thursday that it looked as though he slept through Don King's latest attempt at a time record in oration. In contrast to the tasteless demeanour of Holyfield by one of his co-managers, Rory Holoway, he referred to the challenger as a beautiful fighter. "But I'm better," Tyson added. He said it with a smile that made you fear for the man from Atlanta.

Talking a good fight: Don King (standing) introduces Mike Tyson (left) and Evander Holyfield (second from right) at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas. Photograph: Allsport

Benn determined to prevent demise of the 'Dark Destroyer'

GLYN LEACH reports from Manchester

Nigel Benn sometimes speaks with a forked tongue: tonight he ends his second retirement this year, once more to challenge Steve Collins, the World Boxing Organisation super-middleweight champion, four months after a twisted ankle curtailed their first encounter.

Should Benn be believed when he claims Collins has retired? He is within Britain's most consistently exciting fighter of the last decade? If not, the 20,000-plus crowd at the Nymex Arena, Manchester, will witness the demise of the "Dark Destroyer".

The rematch headlines Frank Warren's lavish promotion which also features the Sheffield showman, Naseem Hamed, and Manchester's Enslay Bingham

in WBO title fights — the first bill ever to boost three world title contests each featuring a British participant. The Manchester card is a free hors d'oeuvre to wet appetites for Sky Sports' second venture into pay-per-view television later this evening, when Mike Tyson headlines

Don King's Las Vegas show featuring three world heavyweight title fights — another first for the Warren-King promoting team.

Hamed's incredible popularity ensures the Manchester promotion box-office success, while the British light-middleweight champion Bingham's challenge to Ronald "Winky" Wright provides local interest. But the super-middleweight (12 stone) fight captures the imagination.

The unsatisfactory four-round ending to Fight One — also at this venue — hinted that Benn's seemingly inexhaustible

capability had run dry. Collins, an unfashionable late entrant to the memorable series of battles featuring Michael Watson, Chris Eubank, Benn and himself, finished as the top dog.

The Dubliner, 32, should prove too strong, too hungry for Benn, also 32, at this stage in his arduous career. Collins' 36 fights (33 wins, three losses) have been less draining. But his fight suggests this is Benn's kind

NEWCASTLE

1.00 King Pin 1.30 Solomon's Dancer 2.05 Tallywagger 2.40 Royal Vacation 3.30 Thornton Gate 3.45 Charming Gate

GOING: Good to go in 10 minutes.

1.00 King Pin (12) 1.30 Solomon's Dancer (12) 2.05 Tallywagger (12) 2.40 Royal Vacation (12) 3.30 Thornton Gate (12) 3.45 Charming Gate (12)

2.05 JACKDAW HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS C) £5,000 added 2m

3.10 EKBALCO HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS B) £7,000 added 2m

3.45 SWIFT HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS D) £5,100 added 5YO plus 2m

1.00 EBF NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES' HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 added 2m

1.30 TOP OF THE NORTH NOVICE CHASE (CLASS E) £4,200 added 2m

2.05 JACKDAW HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS C) £5,000 added 2m

2.40 PEATY SANDY HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS C) £6,500 added 5YO plus 3m

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4.00 SANDOWN

4.15 SANDOWN

4.30 SANDOWN

1.25 ALDANITIS NOVICE CHASE (CLASS D) £5,100 added 2m

1.55 LONDON RACING CLUB HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS B) £7,000 added 2m

2.30 SE RACECOURSE OF THE YEAR HURDLE (CLASS C) £7,000 added 2m

3.00 GUNPOWDER PLOT HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS B) £10,000 added 3m

3.30 SURREY RACING NOVICE HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS D) £4,000 added 2m

4.00 WEATHERS' STARS OF TOMORROW NH FLAT RACE (CLASS II) £2,500 added 2m

2.30 SE RACECOURSE OF THE YEAR HURDLE (CLASS C) £7,000 added 2m

3.00 GUNPOWDER PLOT HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS B) £10,000 added 3m

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Racing

GREG WOOD

THE INDEPENDENT
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WINCASTER	07-1	981
LONDON	07-2	982
CHESTWOLD	07-3	983
NEWCASTLE	07-4	984
WINTONEXETER	07-5	985
JITCANTON	07-6	986

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Singspiel aims at Japan Cup

[illegible]

7 152555-2 TWO OFFICE (10) (10) P. Harborside G Bldg 9 10 4. 18 CB
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9 1103-13 SAMUEL (17) (10) (White Lion) P. Hobbs 7 10 1. 18 R. Rasmussen
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10 MISSED TIME MATCH (F) P. Poochey & Poochey 6 13 4 P. Wickhamby
 11 MOTO BOY (Clayton Price Racing) 5 Sante 5 11 4 J. McNeill
 12 ANGLES BOY (GARY) (D) M. Lloyd 0 Uptot 11 4 4 M. Brown (7)
 13 POT BLUES BOY (L) L. Hobbles 5 13 4 M. Meurin (7)
 14 QUINN EAGLE BOY (B) A. Nychodan M. Page 4 11 4
 15 SOPHIES DREAM (D) T. F. Jones J. M. Bradley 5 13 4 J. McNeill
 16 STELLAR FORCE (M) J. F. Jones D. Shumwood 5 11 4 J. McNeill
 17 WESTBURY TOWN (D) C. Mice J. Newell & Thorne 4 11 4 P. Thorne (7)
 18 SPECIAL TROU (424) (Poochey) Racing A. Jones 6 10 13 J. McNeill
 — 38 declared —
 BETTING: 7-4 Decadence/Poochey, 4-1 Quail Eagle, 5-1 Boulder Force, 7-4 Dark Challenge, 6-1 Lady Rebecca, 32-1 Westbury, 2-4-1 others.
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Tyson the terrible

Ken Jones on tonight's WBA heavy-weight title fight, page 26

sport

In Monday's 20-page sports section

Darren Gough talks to Ian Stafford

Adams leads the search for a psychological edge

Football

IAN RIDLEY reports from Tbilisi

Glenn Hoddle, it seemed, was sending more messages yesterday than poor civil war-damaged Tbilisi's hard-pressed communications system could cope with, as all struggled to phone home, on the eve of England's World Cup qualifying match against Georgia.

In choosing Tony Adams as his captain, Hoddle has sought to bridge the gap between Euphoria '96 and the rather more down business of qualifying for the World Cup in France '98. He also believes that it illustrates a wider point of change for the better. In addition, he sees the real goal of victory as giving England a significant mental edge over their nearest group rivals, Italy.

Adams, a veteran of hostile foreign fields with Arsenal to boot, takes over from the injured Alan Shearer as team leader and is rewarded not just for his form in his club's ascent to the top of the Premiership, but also his altered attitude as he enters the third month of his recovery from alcoholism.

"The main thing has been his form after his knee operation," Hoddle said. "He has probably come back leaner after his injury than he has ever looked in the last three or four years. That's probably significant in the fact that he is addressing his other problem. To me, he has looked sharper and has played consistently well this season."

"And the fact that he is trying to put things right, that might be a good example not just for the players, but for everyone," Hoddle added. "I

think that's the point we are trying to make this week. He's a super example in many ways of how people can turn their lives around and he's getting his just reward for it."

Adams and David Seaman in goal are probably the only certain selections. Last night Hoddle wanted to check on ankle injuries to Gareth Southgate and Stuart Pearce at training in the Boris Paichadze stadium, and the state of the pitch, as well as talking to Paul Gascoigne one last time before deciding on his line-up. "It will be a football discussion," he insisted of the Gazza summit.

The coach did reveal that he would be retaining the 3-5-2 shape of the team, with the composition of the midfield crucial. He is concerned about that area of the Georgians - "Where their strength is".



For that reason, if Gascoigne is a liability defensively against Poland last month - does play. Hoddle is likely to install an extra ball winner in midfield, possibly David Batty, and eschew the fair players Matthew Le Tissier and Steve McManaman, relying instead on Teddy Sheringham and David

Beckham in that department. At the back we could see three more recognisable central defenders, rather than full-backs.

Besides Georgi Kinkladze, the AEK Athens player Temur Ketsbaia is also a ball-carrying worry who will need to be countered. "The vital period for us is the first 25 minutes," Hoddle said. "We have to make sure they don't get on top, because if they do, they have players who can respond."

Hoddle played for England in a 1-0 win against the Soviet Union here 10 years ago but expects this to be a different atmosphere. "There will be more passion," he said. "At that time they were under the USSR and really wanted to be a Republic. England played well on the day and the crowd turned against their team and cheered us, which was an un-

usual situation. I don't think that will happen tomorrow night."

The Georgians are clearly a talented collection of individuals, for whom consistency is the problem. "I have seen them lose 0-5 and win 5-0," Hoddle said. "They are a side with individuals who respond to good support and we have to make sure we don't give anything away early doors."

Should England retain possession sufficiently to quell the crowd, wresting control of the crucial midfield, they should then have enough defensive organisation and striking potential to eke out a victory, albeit narrow.

It would see England three points clear of Italy at the top of the group after wins over Moldova and Poland, with the home game against the Italians

next up at Wembley in February, when Shearer will return as captain, if available, as Hoddle has promised him a three-game run.

"It wouldn't be a disaster if we drew, but we will be trying to win this game," Hoddle said. "It is significant that the Italians don't play competitively this week and if we get the three points against Georgia, then going into the Wembley game, it will be an edge to us psychologically."

Indeed, such a result, should there be telephone lines to send it out, would give a strong message in a group from which only one nation will qualify automatically. It might also be more of a fillip temporarily for Adams and Co than any counsellor can provide.

Captain Adams, plus other World Cup news, page 28

Stress forces Coppel to quit City job

GUY HODGSON and ALAN NIXON

It took Manchester City six weeks to find a new manager and 33 days to lose him. Steve Coppel, who

was appointed on 7 October, resigned from his post at Maine Road yesterday, citing health reasons. The club, too, had a sickly pallor at the announcement.

In a statement, the 41-year-old Coppel, who will be succeeded on a caretaker basis by his assistant, Phil Neal, revealed that stress had forced his hand. "I am not ashamed to admit I have suffered for some time from the huge pressure I have imposed on myself," he said. "Since my appointment, this has completely overwhelmed me to such an extent that I can't function in the job in the way I would like to."

"As the situation is affecting my well-being, I have asked Francis Lee (the club's chairman) to relieve me of my obligation to manage the club on medical advice. I am therefore resigning solely for personal reasons."

Coppel, looking drawn and his voice cracking with emotion, said it had been the hardest decision he had ever made. "I am extremely embarrassed by the situation and I would like to apologise first and foremost to Francis Lee and his board, who did everything in their power to help me. Francis has been particularly understanding and I would like to thank him for that."

Coppel also apologised to the players and supporters, who must wonder what further

mishap can afflict a club who were relegated to the Premier League in May and who have lived with rumours of takeover bids the last six months. The successor will be the club's third manager this season after Alan Ball resigned in August, and their ninth in the past 10 years.

Lee said that Coppel revealed his problems at the beginning of the week and refused either to take a holiday to reconsider, or to be persuaded to change his mind. "I have spoken to him two or three times every day this week," Lee said.

and it will be difficult, as past events have proved, to find a man of similar calibre. George Graham, who has since accepted a post at Leeds, and Dave Bassett turned down the job after Ball's departure, while Howard Kendall and Kenny Dalglish also rejected the position via the media even though, Lee insists, they were never offered it.

Coppel was City's third choice, but even his appointment had an element of gambling about it as the then Crystal Palace technical director had been away from management for more than three years. His record in his six matches at Maine Road was two wins, a draw and three defeats, which leaves the club in 17th place in the First Division.

Neal, a former manager with Bolton, Coventry and Cardiff, was as stunned as the players at Coppel's departure. "I spoke to Steve last Sunday and heard that he was not well," he said. "I thought he was just physically sick. I didn't realise what was underneath it all. It wasn't once implied that this would be his final decision."

Neal revealed that two of the City players were literally bowled over by the news. Eddie McGoldrick and Paul Dickov fell to the ground in shock. None of the players had any idea about developments until Neal spoke to them after training.

Where Lee will turn next is anyone's guess. Supporters welcomed Coppel's appointment, despite his connections with Manchester United, for whom he played almost 400 times. Although his statement has to be taken at face value, there will be many wondering if there is a hidden agenda.



Francis Lee (right), the Manchester City chairman, looks on as Steve Coppel announces his resignation as manager yesterday. Photograph: Niles Team

Was Lee interfering or was money promised for transfers not forthcoming? Although Coppel has made it clear his decision was purely personal, it will not make it any easier to fill a position that was not too good to refuse even before this latest setback. Asa Hartford, the assistant given charge of the first team when Ball left, said he did not want the job.

Neal now faces the challenge that proved too much for Coppel, whose throwaway comment after his first home

match carries more significant now. "They call Manchester Madchester," he said, "and now I know why."

For a proud, intelligent man who said the chance to manage City had left him "excited and delighted", it was a sad day. But as Lee himself pointed out yesterday: "There have been too many sad days" at Maine Road.

Coppel's resignation had Howard Wilkinson, the League Managers' Association chairman, calling on football's

governing bodies to ease the pressure under which managers now operate.

Wilkinson, himself a manager for 15 years before being sacked by Leeds in September, said: "There is no doubt the game has changed dramatically in the last 10 years in terms of the manager's role or the manager's perceived role. Ill health is not a new thing in management, but it is an increasing one and it's not enough to say that the pay for the job is good."

Don Howe, the former Arsenal and Coventry manager and ex-England coach, sympathised with Coppel's plight.

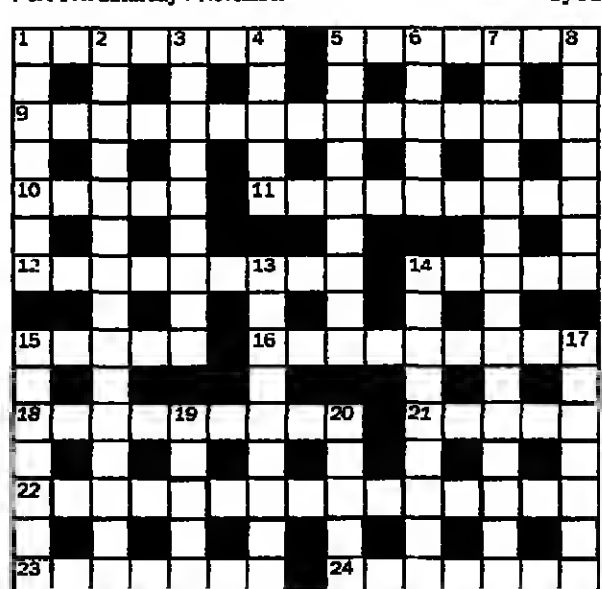
"Steve doesn't make these decisions lightly... But there's something about Steve Coppel. He won't go and hide away. That's the last thing he'll do."

Zola signing finalised, page 29

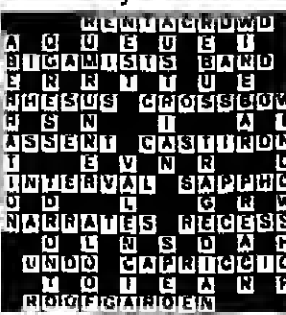
THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3140, Saturday 9 November

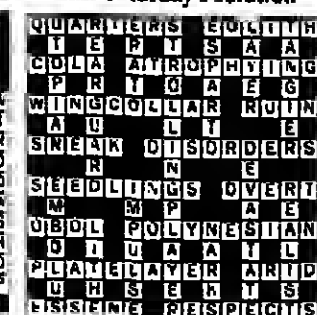
By Phil



Friday's solution



Last Saturday's solution



ACROSS

- 1 Cooked, glowing with heat in oven? On the contrary (7)
- 5 Large lorry to which the French object (7)
- 9 Insist on self-defence? (5,2,4,4)
- 10 Attendant finally spots rubbish (5)
- 11 Clearly taking one in without a fuss (9)
- 12 Ring-side seat for me! (5-4)
- 14 Display principal resistance (5)
- 15 Old coin once found in Tube (5)
- 16 Voices raised in argument beside river (9)
- 18 An allergy unfortunately affecting the voice-box (9)
- 21 Peculiarity I observed in Italian restaurant (5)
- 22 At one's peak age? (1,3,2,3,5)
- 23 Forcibly extract information about round prison (7)
- 24 Quickly charge, without great intent (7)

DOWN

- 1 Dish with rice - it's mixed with roots (7)
- 2 No actor, apparently, in Disney feature? (8,7)
- 3 Be encouraged and make plans for a transplant! (4,5)
- 4 After a climb, out-of-condition Dave's first to wilt (5)
- 5 Relative breaking rule about appearing initially undated? (2,7)
- 6 Experience some nourishment as terrible (5)
- 7 Date Roman poet's brought and arraigned? (5-10)
- 8 Tried ornamenting sad eyes (7)
- 13 Quiet period for opposing states separated by oceans (3-6)
- 14 Where suckers are parted from their lolly? Yes and no (5-4)
- 15 Stupid person runs everywhere over during failure (7)
- 17 Saturday is this setter, we hear, he hopes to do this (7)
- 19 Move gingerly, being nearly naked, say, on rising (5)
- 20 Lecturer's attention occupied by overture from Haydn (a composer) (5)

The first five correct solutions to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday receive hand-drawn copies of the new Oxford Dictionary of Quotations. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P.O. Box 4018, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 3DL. Please use the box number and postcode and give your own postcode. Last week's winners: J. Meele, Leicester; Dr Templeton, Haringham; Richard Warren, Coventry; Stuart Kerylow, London NW7; L. De Barra, Little Chalfont.

Giddins 'hopeful' as drug ban is upheld

Cricket
DEREK PRINGLE

Ed Giddins, the Sussex and England A bowler banned for 19 months when traces of cocaine were found during a random drugs test last season, had his appeal quashed at Lord's yesterday. In probably their last meeting before next year's assimilation into the new England Cricket Board, the four-man Cricket Council, chaired by Judge Desmond Perrett QC, upheld the original decision made by the Test and County Cricket Board in August.

As no fresh evidence was offered - merely an appeal that the sentence was too severe - the decision came as little surprise. With a recent children's poll placing sportsmen and clergy not far behind parents in the list of who they look to for morality, even the presence of Michael Lawrence, the solicitor who managed to overturn the £2,000 fine levied on Ray Illingworth, failed to make any headway.

"It was an extremely fair meeting," Lawrence said. "Ed couldn't have wished for a better tribunal. It's a disappointing result but he'll just have to take it on the chin. In the long run though, I think his talent will prevail."

The meeting, which lasted just over two and a half hours, was obviously draining and upon its conclusion, Giddins was

immediately driven away by his agent, Gareth James, returning an hour later to face questions from the press.

"I'm very upset. Even angry. Which is unusual for me," said Giddins, normally an unusually cheery cove for a fast bowler, albeit one with an alternative slant that did not always sit comfortably with the old pros in the Sussex dressing-room. When asked what he was going to do now, he quipped: "Go to the pub."

The decision leaves the 25-year-old Giddins, unceremoniously dumped by Sussex, without any obvious means of support. "Cricket has been my life for a long time now," he said. "I'm not going to leave it. The reason I appealed is because I wanted to be playing first-class cricket next season. That, and all the supportive letters I've had from the public."

Responding to rumours that 10 counties were interested in signing him Giddins added: "There have been some good talks recently and I hope to be able to sign a contract next week." That may be wishful thinking now that his ban remains in place until April 1998.

His plans for the short term revolve around opening a shop in Parson's Green, selling Christmas trees in partnership with Surrey's Nadeem Shahid. Perhaps that, more than the ban, will make him realise the folly of his ways.

Tunell's new leaf, page 25



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